Sixe SERMONS.

The Back-parts of Iehouah IN *Foure Sermons vpon Exod.* Chap. 34. verſ. 6.7.

Cor. 1. 31. 12.

Now we ſee through a glaſſe darkely.

AND

THE SPIRITVALL TILLAGE,

OR,

A Brieſe of two Sermons preached vpon two places of Scripture, in which is laid forth, the diſ-*ferent, both Huſbandrie and Harveſt of* the Righteous and the wicked.

BY SAM. HIERON.

Gal. 6. 7.

Whatſoeuer a man ſoweth that ſhall he alſo reape.

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SIXE
SERMONS.

To the right worſhipful Sir Richard Champernowne, of Modburie in Deuon. Knight.

SIR, there is a generation of men now a daies, who hauing litle iudgement, and leſſe honeſtie, are very forward (in hope, by that meanes to be reputed ſome-thing) to cenſure other mens endeauours. Touching ſuch for mine own part, I am at a point, and ſay with the Apoſtle, I paſſe very litle to be iudged of them. Yet am I not ſo without regard, but that I would be loath that any man who hath in him any true worth, and is of a right religious vnderſtanding, ſhould think me (becauſe of my diuerſe publiſhings) to be caried with that buſie humor, through which no ſmall many in this ſcribbling age, haue euen made the times to ſurfet with their needleſſe papers. Wherefore to cleare my ſelfe to euery ſober iudgement, this I ſay: I was firſt drawn into this courſe of preſenting ſome ſermons of mine to publike view, by the requeſt of ſome friends: next, I receiued encouragement to proceed by the good approouement of ſundry fearing God. And then alſo, I thought, that by doing ſomewhat in this kind, I might make my hearers ſome part of a recompence, for that wrong which I doe them ſometimes through my naturall infirmitie of too much quickneſſe in deliuerie. Now hauing in theſe ſettings-foorth, remembred diuers of my deſeruedly reſpected friends, if I ſhould forget your Worſhip ſo neere me in dwelling, and (vnles I much miſtake) no leſſe neere in affection, I ſhould not know 1. Cor. 4. 3.

well, how to auoide the imputation of ouer-much neglect. I cannot doubt of kind acceptance, where I haue receiued ſo many teſtimonies of much reſpect. If by further looking into this meane offer, you ſhall receiue any furtherance in that good which I haue euer heartily wiſhed to your ſoule, it will giue me no ſmall contentment. Thus commending theſe Copies vnto you firſt: and then from you to the vſe of Gods Church, I leaue you to his grace, who will neuer leaue thoſe whom he hath once vouchſafed to loue in Chriſt Ieſus.

Modburie in Deuon. Septemb. 8. 1608.

Your Worſh. in all readineſſe to doe you my beſt ſeruice,

SAM. HIERON.

The

The Back-parts of Iehouah.

EXOD. cap. 34. vers. 6. 7.

So the Lord passed before his face and cryed, Iehouah, Iehouah, strong, mercifull, and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in goodnes and truth,

Reseruing mercie for thousands, forgiuing iniquitie, and transgression and sin, and not making the wicked innocent, visiting the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, and vpon the childrens children, vnto the third and fourth generation.

THE FIRST SERMON.

THE occasion of these words was this. We read in the latter part of the fore-going chapter [a], how Moses, for his better strengthening in that weightie charge with which the Lord had entrusted him, desired God to shew him his glory, to wit the very fulnes of his maiesty. God answered him, [b] that the satisfying of this his request, could not but be very very hurtfull vnto him, inasmuch as, (saith he) *there shall no man see me and liue*; meaning thereby, that the weakens of mans mortall nature, cannot beare the glory of his presence, but shall be euen oppressed & swallowed vp with maiesty, euen as we see the sight of the eie to be dazed with the brightnes of the Sunne, or a chrystall glasse to be broken to pieces, with the strong working of the fire: But yet (saith God to Moses) this will I doe, *I will put thee in a cleft of a rocke, and will couer thee with my hand, whiles I passe by: After, I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back-*

The occasion of the words.

[a] vers. 18.

[b] vers. 20.

c verſ 22.23. back-parts, but my face ſhall not be ſeene c. By which courſe framed to the capacity and vnderſtanding of Moſes, (and of vs alſo,) in which God ſpeaketh of himſelfe as of a man, having face and backe, the Lords meaning was to teach both Moſes and vs, that it is vnpoſſible for any man in this mortality, perfectly and exactly to know and conceiue the nature and beeing of the moſt high. Our knowledge of him in this life is *in*
d 1.cor.13.12. *part* d, like the beholding of a man ſodenly paſſing by vs, whoſe back-parts only we can look vpon: the more full knowing him, is reſerued to that time in which we
e 1.Ioh.3.2. being made *like vnto him, ſhall ſee him as he is* e, euen
f 1.cor.13.12. *face to face* f, in his owne kingdome. Now that which God promiſed to Moſes in the former chapter is performed in this; Moſes beeing placed in the cleft of the rocke, the Lord paſſed by, & vttered a voice, by which was diſcouered ſo much touching God, as Moſes either was able, or els needed to conceiue. *Iehouah, Iehouah, ſtrong, &c.* Theſe two verſes my purpoſe is, to open vnto you, to the end we may haue ſome better vnderſtanding of God, (what an one he is,) then for the moſt part it ſeemeth we haue, and may learne to feare his maieſty, to loue his mercy, and to tremble at his iuſtice more then we haue done heretofore. Our common conceipts of God are very groſſe and ridiculous. Ignorant people ſuppoſe him to be a man in ſhape and paſſiõ like themſelues: The Epicure, who thought there was no happines vnder the Sunne, but in carnall pleaſure, imagined God to be of the ſame ſenſuall humor, and deemed, that freedome from buſines was his chiefe
g Pſ.50.18.21. felicitie. And Dauid ſaith in the Pſalme, g that the *vngodly* perſon, who runneth to all maner of exceſſe, ioyning with the *thiefe*, and *partaking with the adulterer*, and opening his mouth with the *ſlaunderer*, thinkes God to be *like himſelfe*: And generally our priuate thoughts touching God, are not ſo holy, ſo reuerent, ſo diuine, ſo full of reſpect as they ought to be. So that it ſhall be

good

good for vs to consider well of this portion of Scripture which is Gods owne testimony touching himselfe.

Before I come to speake directly of that description which is here made of God, one thing may not vnprofitably be obserued out of that which is first said, *so the Lord passed before Moses face and cryed*: and it is this. Moses his desire was (as appeareth) to haue seene some outward and visible testimony of the glory and maiesty of God, which euen with his eies he might haue looked vpon. Now, howsoeuer God did not leaue Moses herein altogether vnsatisfied, for no doubt, at this time, God gaue some such sensible appearance which affected the eye of Moses, for which cause it is said [h], *the Lord descended in the cloud*, yet the maine thing vsed to informe Moses in that, which it principally behoued him to vnderstand, was a voice: All other circumstances serued but as preparatiues to strike an awfulnes into Moses heart, and to fit him to that which the purpose of God was to reueale vnto him: It was a voice which was the chiefe instrument, to conuey into the mind and vnderstanding of Moses, the necessary knowledge of *Iehouah*, which course (as to me seemeth) serued euen then to insinuate, that Teaching by a voice, should euer be the choice and principal meanes, by which the Lord would bring his people vnto the true and saluing knowledge of himselfe. When God appeared to Elias, [i] we read that before him went *a mightie strong wind, which rent &c. the mountaines; but* (saith the text) *the Lord was not in the wind: After the wind came an earthquake, and after it a fire, but the Lord was in neither*: But then last of all *came a still and soft voice*, and in that the Lord was: and that was it which most affected Elias his heart; For (as the story saith) *when Elias heard it, he couered his face with his mantell, and went out, &c.* I remember, that where as there is a strait charge giuen in *Deuteronomy*, touching images and representations to worship God by, this is the principall reason of the prohibition [k], *ye saw*

[h] vers. 5.

Doct.

[i] 1. King. 19. 11.

[k] Deut. 4. 12.

no similitude saue a voice. Out of which the Lord would haue them to learne, that as in the first deliuery of the law, the instrument which God caught them by, was a voice, (he purposely forbearing to present himselfe to to their eies in a visible shape, least they should stick to much vpon outward shewes,) so they likewise in the following times, should trust especially to the same meanes which God (as it were) by his own mouth, had sanctified vnto them at the beginning, namely, *a voice.* The nature of man is very enclinable to affect rather that which with some outward shewe offereth it selfe vnto the eie, then to content it selfe with the bare and naked instruction of the eare: And therefore we see, both how full all false religions deuised by men, haue euer beene of outward beauty, of Images, and signes, and bodily representments, and how apt the people haue beene in all times to entertaine that soonest, which to their eies seemed gayest. It was the baite of Popery, and the thing by which the world generally was bewitched, euen the goodly images, and the glorious furniture wherewith the sacrificing priests were arayed, and the churches bedecked. The people were made beleeue, that there was a mysterie in euery dumbe shew, and that the variety of imagery was laymens bookes, in which they might with their eies see euen the very body and substance of religion. In the meane time, the maine instrument of teaching, I meane *a voice*, was either banished, or els sowtered in a strange tongue, and confused tune, that the soules of the people could not receiue any edifying thereby. Well might they feed their hungry eyes, with gazing vpon painted Idols, or haue their eares tickled with some pleasing noise, but that their hearing should be a messenger to their inward parts of any sound doctrine, by which their consciences might be comforted, it was impossible, nay it was the very thing which was purposely auoided. Now although the Lord hath had

some

some respect vnto our nature, and hath therefore appointed two Sacraments, by which to represent to our eies, that which the word reporteth to our eares, yet the voice of God (which is his word) is still the principall, and vnto it those visible seruices are in their owne nature as outward seales.

The vse hereof (which is also the end why I noted it) is to maintaine the credit and needfull vse of that order of instructing vs, which the Lord his will is, should haue the chiefe place in his seruice. The wisedome of man might imagine, that it were no hard thing to deuise other meanes, more likely to edifie the soule then this of hearing, according as Moses (it may be) held opinion, that if his eies might once see the maiesty of God, it would be the onely meanes to confirme him: But (as the Apostle speaketh) *The foolishnes of God is wiser then men*, and as he thought it fitter to informe Moses by the eare then to giue him his desire, in presenting himselfe to his eie, so he doth still hold the same course, and hath ordained the sense of hearing, to be (as it were) the pipe, by which the *sauing* knowledge of his will, may be conueied downe into the heart, and whosoeuer doe neglect or despise this meanes, the Lord will curse all other helpes vnto them, which together with this, might haue beene exceeding profitable. I remember what the rich man lying in hell, said to Abraham [m]; he was earnest with him that *Lazarus* might be sent to aduertise his brethren of his misery, imagining that would be a very effectuall motiue to repentance; according as in our reason, we would thinke that if one should come among vs out of the place of the damned, and tell what kind of men were there, it would strike a feare into mens hearts; *If one* (saith he) *came vnto them from the dead, they will amend their liues.* But now what said Abraham? *They haue Moses and the Prophets, if they will not heare them, neither will they be perswaded though*

The vse.

1. Cor. 1. 25.

[m] Luk. 16. 27. &c.

vnerise from the dead againe. It shewes plainely, that those who will not be instructed by hearing, they are euen past hope, there is no course, though in mans reason neuer so likely, that is able to recouer them. Let it admonish vs, if we desire to know God, to prepare our eares to the meanes of knowledge: Remember what Salomon hath said, that it is but *the sacrifice of fooles*, which all those performe, who come *into the house of God*, and are *not neere* and ready *to heare*[n]. Thus much I thought good (by the way) to note hence, that Moses desiring to conceiue the Maiesty of God, was instructed rather, or (at the least) more largely, by the eare, then by outward and visible representments. I come now to the description it selfe.

[n] Eccl. 4. 17.

The order of the Text, how it is to be handled.

Touching which, we must vnderstand that God is here described to vs by foure things. 1. His Essence or Beeing. 2. His Power. 3. His Mercie. 4. His Iustice. The first is in that word *Iehouah*, which for the making of Moses more attentiue, is twise repeated, (*Iehouah, Iehouah.*) This name is properly belonging vnto God, neither can be communicated vnto any creature in heauen or earth whatsoeuer: and it is such as we are not able in our language, by any one word to expresse. To omit many busie questions about this name, and to deliuer only so much as is needfull, and may be also best vnderstood by those which are euen of the meanest capacity, it doth note out vnto vs concerning God three things especially. First, that God is an *Eternall Beeing*, that is, euen as the Scripture saith, one *which is, which was, and which is to come*[o]. He hath beene a God euer, he is so at this instant, and shall be so without end. For this cause he told Moses els where[p], that his name *was I Am*, signifying thereby, that there neuer was any time neither shall be, in which the Lord might not, and may not truely say of himselfe, *I Am.* And to this end are the sayings of the Scripture, *Before the mountaines were made, and before thou hadst formed the earth,*

Of the name Iehouah.

[o] Reuel. 1. 4.

[p] Exod. 3. 14.

earth, and the world, euen from euerlasting to euerlasting thou art God [q]. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall be after me [r]. Thus saith he which inhabiteth Eternitie [s]. He is called in another place [t], *the King of ages*, and is said to haue *made the times* [u]. And the word which in the language wherein the Scripture was written, doth vse to signifie *Eternall*, is drawne from a roote which betokeneth to *lie hid*, because the Beginning and the End of God lieth hid, and is a thing altogether vnknowne. If a man looke neuer so farre back, he shall neuer find where his *Being began*, if he inquire neuer so carefully or curiously into the times to come, he shall neuer find out any limits to it, or any likelihood of an end. This is Gods Eternitie, the first thing signified and meant by this name of his *Iehouah*. The second thing meant by it, is, that he it is which giueth *Being* to all things els whatsoeuer. And that this is the meaning of it, appeares by that saying, *I am Iehouah that made all things* [x], as though he should say, *This is my Name, thus am I called, because as I haue my Being from my selfe, so I giue vnto all things their being*: according to the saying of the Apostle, *Of him, and for him, and through him are all things* [y]: and in another place, *In him we liue, we moue and haue our being* [z]. Thirdly this name *Iehouah*, betokeneth thus much touching God; that he doth fully accomplish and make good all his purposes: and for confirmation hereof it is a notable place, euen the saying of God vnto Moses, *I appeared vnto Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, by the name of Almightie, but by my name Iehouah I was not knowne vnto them* [a]. The meaning is, that howsoeuer the Lord, by creating the world, and after, by destroying it for the sinnes thereof, and by many other blessings bestowed vpon these men, had declared himselfe to be a mightie and powerfull God, yet he had neuer so fully shewed himselfe vnto them to be *Iehouah*; because they in their times saw not the performance of those promises which he had anciently made

[q] Psal. 90. 2.
[r] Isa. 43. 10.
[s] Isa. 57. 15.
[t] 1. Tim 1. 17.
[u] Heb. 1. 2. τοὺς αἰῶνας.
[x] Isa. 44. 24.
[y] Rom. 11. 36.
[z] Act. 17. 28.
[a] Exod. 6. 3.

touching the deliuerie of the people out of Egypt: so that now Moses & the rest, knew his name *Iehouah*, because they were to be eie-witnesses, of the fulfilling of that old promise touching their deliuerance from Pharaoh his captiuitie. VVe may not so vnderstand the places, though the name *Iehouah* was not knowne vnto Abraham and the rest: for God so kiteth himselfe both to Abraham [a], and vnto Iacob [b]: but this (as I haue said) was the meaning, that then and at that instant, & by that miraculous deliuerance he would more manifestly shew himselfe to be *Iehouah*, (that is, a *performer of promises*) then he had done in former times. The things which Abraham and Izhak and Iacob, had only heard, Moses and they which then liued should see fulfilled and accomplished. So that this place thus opened, is a manifest proofe that he is therefore called *Iehouah*, because as he himselfe is, so he maketh that to be, which he hath promised. For which cause it is an ordinary thing in the Scripture when the Lord doth either promise or threaten any great matter, he doth put vnto it his name *Iehouah*, as a seale of performing it. I will shew you an example or two of it. *I will send vpon you* (saith God by the prophet) *famine and euill beasts &c, I Iehouah haue spoken it* [c], as if he had said, *you may be sure this shall take effect, I Iehouah haue decreed it, and I am able to performe it.* Thus God beginneth the law, I *am Iehouah*, to assure that nothing shall fall to the ground, either of the blessings promised, or of the iudgements denounced in the same. Whosoeuer readeth *Ierem.* 31. a chapter abounding with many gracious promises, touching the new couenant in Christ, touching forgiuenes of sinnes, and the writing of the law in our hearts &c, shall find this name *Iehouah*, (or for it, *Lord*, the word *Iehouah* being vsually so translated) two or three and twenty seuerall times made mention of. So that all this serues to make this point plaine, that God is tearmed *Iehouah*, because he doth not giue

[a] Gen. 15. 7.
[b] Gen. 28. 13.
[c] Ezech. 5. 17.

words onely, but certainety and accomplishment also vnto all his promises. Thus we see the meaning of this *glorious name Iehouah*. Let vs proceede to examine what vse we may make of all these specialties to our selues. Deut. 28. 58.

First, whereas the Lord our God is said to be an *Eternall Being*, which neuer had beginning and knoweth no End, it serueth to shew vnto vs, what a hatefull thing it is to goe about to expresse this Infiniteness, in an Image of wood or stone, or mettall, or any other worke of mans hand. In *Isaiah* his prophecy you shall find this vse: *To whome* (saith the holy Ghost) *will ye liken God, or what similitude will you set vp vnto him*? for In that chapter sundry reasons are vrged to shew what an idle and foolish thing it is, but who so obserueth the place, shall find the principall to be fetched from the maiestie and eternity of *Iehouah*: as indeed it is a grosse and a sense-les thing to seeke to shadow him out, who neuer had beginning, and neuer shall haue end, by that thing the beginning whereof we haue seene, and which we well know may quickly be consumed. It were a disgrace to the Kings Maiestie, if one should vndertake to picture him in the fashion of a poore, ragged, filthy, deformed, leprous and vnwoorthy person: vnder what pretence soeuer it were done, it would be thought very inconuenient. Now there can not be that difference betwixt one man and another, as is betwixt the most glorious creature and the Lord. The representing of the Nature and Maiestie of God by Images, is called a *turning of the truth of God into a lie*, because the beholding of them doth make a false report of God, and breedeth in the conceipts of the looker on, such imaginations touching God, as are indeed very grosse and vtterly vntrue. And let what colour soeuer the diuell can helpe to deuise, be set vpon it, yet it must needes make him that seeth the Image, either thinke so honourably of the matter because it represents God, or so basely of God, The first vse of the first signification of Iehouah. Isa. 40. 18. Romans 1.

God, who is figured out by a dumbe shew, by a piece of a block, which is sooner consumed, then it was at the first framed. I speake this to this end, that it may beget in vs a detestation of Popery, the beauty whereof doth consist in such abominable representations of the eternall *Iehouah*, whom the mind of man cannot conceiue, much lesse the worke of any hand expresse.

The 2. Vse. 1 a. Tim. 6. 16. Secondly, seeing *Iehouah* is an *Eternall Being*, one, who as Saint Paul saith [a], *onely hath Immortalitie*, it teacheth vs, to whom we must goe, that we may come vnto Eternitie. Our soules indeed, euen in this sinfull estate, are immortall and shall be for euer, but such is the immortall miserie which we haue made our selues subiect vnto through sinne, that that immortality, is in Scripture called by the name of an *Eternall Death*: and a thousand times better were it for a man neuer to haue been, then not to be deliuered from that dying life. Now as man by falling from *Iehouah* brought himselfe into the danger of this miserable *Eternitie*, so, but by beeing againe vnited and ioyned vnto him, there is no hope of that glorious Immortalitie. He is the fountaine of Euerlastingnes, and the life of the *soule* is worse then death, vntill it hath receiued a new quickning from his power. If you aske of me, how this Eternitie which is in God may be communicated vnto vs, I answer, that Christ Iesus who hath ioyned the nature of man vnto his Godhead, is the alone meanes, by which we may be vnited vnto God. No man commeth *vnto Father but by me* [b]. Vnto Christ we are vnited by his spirit: his spirit goeth with his word: by it he begets a new life in the dead and rotten heart of man; by it he raiseth him vp vnto the life of grace, and prepareth him by degrees euery day more and more vnto the life of glorie. For this cause the word of God is called an *Immortall seed* [i], an *eternall Word* [k], the *word of Life* [l], a *quickning Word* [m], and all for this cause, because it bringeth vs

[a] Ioh. 14. 6.

[i] 1. Pet. 1. 23.
[k] Psa. 19. 9.
[l] Act. 5. 20.
[m] Psa. 119. 50.

vnto

vnto Christ, *in whom are hid all the treasures* [n] of happi- [n] Col. 2.3.
nes, and in the *knowledge* of whom *life euerlasting* [o] doth [o] Ioh. 17.3.
consist. So then marke this: God calleth himselfe *Iehouah*: what is that? one who is the fountaine & head-spring of all Eternitie: what must the knowing hereof teach me? I must thinke thus with my selfe, I am by nature no better then others, euen the child of eternall death; the immortality which I haue, doth but make me subiect vnto end-les miserie: How then might I come to be partaker of that glorious eternity? I answer thee, nay the word of God answereth thee; But by Christ, thou canst neuer obtaine it: But by the word, thou canst neuer be ioyned vnto Christ. Looke into the word, exercise thy selfe in that, there thou shalt find him: Be a stranger to the word, care not for it, despise it, desire not to know it, thou shalt neuer haue part with Christ, nor dwell with *Iehouah*, who is the King of Times, and the father of Eternity. These two vses we may make of the first thing ment by this name *Iehouah*: He is *Eternall*, one that hath his *Beeing* from himselfe: therfore not to be represented by the fading workmanship of mortal mã: therfore to be sought vnto by Christ if we desire immortality with him in his Kingdome.

He is called *Iehouah* also, because he hath giuen their *beeing* to all other things which haue any *beeing*. This doth teach vs two things. First, touching our selues, seeing the life and *beeing* which we haue, we haue it from the *Lord*, it vrgeth vpon vs the consecrating and deuoting of our selues wholy vnto him. It is a thing which standeth euen with reason, that the life which we haue receiued from his mercy, should be imployed wholy to his glory. *Who planteth a vineyard* (saith the Apostle,) *and eateth not of the fruit thereof? who feedeth a flocke, and eateth not of the milke of the flocke?* [p] Euery man expects [p] 1 Cor. 9.7.
a benefit by that wherein he hath bestowed charge; why may not the Lord then by good right challenge all seruice and honour and obedience from vs, seeing

The two vses of the second signification of *Iehouah*. The 1. vse.

God, who is figured out by a dumbe shew, by a piece of a block, which is sooner consumed, then it was at the first framed. I speake this to this end, that it may beget in vs a detestation of Popery, the beauty whereof doth consist in such abominable representations of the eternall *Iehouah*, whom the mind of man cannot conceiue, much lesse the worke of any hand expresse.

The 2. Vse. 1 a. Tim. 6. 16. Secondly, seeing *Iehouah* is an *Eternall Being*, one, who as Saint Paul saith [1], *onely hath Immortalitie*, it teacheth vs, to whom we must goe, that we may come vnto Eternitie. Our soules indeed, euen in this sinfull estate, are immortall and shall be for euer, but such is the immortall miserie which we haue made our selues subiect vnto through sinne, that that immortality, is in Scripture called by the name of an *Eternall Death*: and a thousand times better were it for a man neuer to haue been, then not to be deliuered from that dying life. Now as man by falling from *Iehouah* brought himselfe into the danger of this miserable *Eternitie*, so, but by beeing againe vnited and ioyned vnto him, there is no hope of that glorious Immortalitie. He is the fountaine of Euerlastingnes, and the life of the *soule* is worse then death, vntill it hath receiued a new quickning from his power. If you aske of me, how this Eternitie which is in God may be communicated vnto vs, I answer, that Christ Iesus who hath ioyned the nature of man vnto his Godhead, is the alone meanes, by which we may be vnited vnto God. No man commeth to the *Father but by me* [b]. Vnto Christ we are vnited by his spirit: his spirit goeth with his word: by it he begets a new life in the dead and rotten heart of man; by it he raiseth him vp vnto the life of grace, and prepareth him by degrees euery day more and more vnto the life of glorie. For this cause the word of God is called an *Immortall seed* [i], an *eternall Word* [k], the *word of Life* [l], a *quickning Word* [m], and all for this cause, because it bringeth vs

[b] Ioh. 14. 6.

[i] 1. Pet. 1. 23.
[k] Psa. 119. 89.
[l] Act. 5. 20.
[m] Psa. 119. 50.

vnto

vnto Christ, *in whom are hid all the treasures* [n] of happi- [n] Col. 2. 3.
nes, and in the *knowledge* of whom *life euerlasting* [o] doth [o] Ioh. 17. 3.
consist. So then marke this: God calleth himselfe *Iehouah*: what is that? one who is the fountaine & head-spring of all Eternitie: what must the knowing hereof teach me? I must thinke thus with my selfe, I am by nature no better then others, euen the child of eternall death; the immortality which I haue, doth but make me subiect vnto end-les miserie: How then might I come to be partaker of that glorious eternity? I answer thee, nay the word of God answereth thee; But by Christ, thou canst neuer obtaine it: But by the word, thou canst neuer be ioyned vnto Christ. Looke into the word, exercise thy selfe in that, there thou shalt find him: Be a stranger to the word, care not for it, despise it, desire not to know it, thou shalt neuer haue part with Christ, nor dwell with *Iehouah*, who is the King of Times, and the father of Eternity. These two vses we may make of the first thing ment by this name *Iehouah*: He is *Eternall*, one that hath his *Being* from himselfe: therfore not to be represented by the fading workmanship of mortal mā; therfore to be sought vnto by Christ if we desire immortality with him in his Kingdome.

He is called *Iehouah* also, because he hath giuen their *beeing* to all other things which haue any *beeing*. This doth teach vs two things. First, touching our selues, seeing the life and *beeing* which we haue, we haue it from the *Lord*, it vrgeth vpon vs the consecrating and denoting of our selues wholy vnto him. It is a thing which standeth euen with reason, that the life which we haue receiued from his mercy, should be imployed wholy to his glory. *Who planteth a vineyard* (saith the Apostle,) *and eateth not of the fruit thereof? who feedeth a flocke, and eateth not of the milke of the flocke?* [p] Euery man expects [p] 1 Cor. 9. 7.
a benefit by that wherein he hath bestowed charge; why may not the Lord then by good right challenge all seruice and honour and obedience from vs, seeing

The two vses of the second signification of *Iehouah*. The 1. vse.

we are his workmanship, and that this, that we can doe any thing, hath proceeded wholly from his grace? Salomon saith, that *the Lord made all things for his owne* q Prou. 16. 4. *sake* q. It was the glory of his owne name, which was the chiefe end aymed at by him, in giuing a *beeing* vnto all things. There is no man in the world, but, if another had risen by him, and comen from no body, to be a man of some fashion and ability, would thinke he had receiued a great wrong, and a foule indignity, if that man should oppose himselfe against him, or should not be ready to ioyne with him in his occasions. His vnthankfulnes should againe and againe be obiected to him, that he should so much forget him, from whom he had receiued all his aduancement. How much more iustly may the Lord except against vs, when as liuing and mooving only in and through him, we shall notwithstanding affoard the vse of our life and mooving rather to the seruice of the deuill, in doing his will, then to the seruice of God in the promoting of his glory? When as Dauid vpon the misinformation of *Ziba*, challenged *Mephibosheth* (one of Sauls line) for not ioyning with him and assisting him in his troubles intended against him by his sonne Absalom, he, to cleere himselfe of all imputation of false-heartednes towards Dauid, answered on this wise, *All my fathers house were but dead men before my Lord the King, yet didst thou set thy* r 2. Sam. 19. 28. *seruant among them that dide ate at thine owne table* r, signifying thereby that all the world might iustly condemne him for a villaine and a wretch, if beeing so aduanced by Dauid, (at whose mercy his life stood,) he should haue entertained a traiterous and disloyall thought against him. I speake it to this end, to shew how hatefull a thing it is to forget from whom a man hath receiued his first beginning, and vnthankfully to demeane ones selfe towards him by whom he is that which he is, and without whose gracious sustaining, he should soone returne vnto his first nothing. This

could

could not chuſe but be a very fruitfull and profitable meditation, when a man ſhould view himſelfe, and all the powers and faculties of his ſoule and body, and ſhould conſider withall from whom he had receiued them. How is it poſſible, but a man euen for very ſhame, ſhould thus thinke with himſelfe? Did God giue me a tongue to blaſpheme his name, to ſlander others, to ſpeake of any thing rather then of his word? did he beſtow mine eies to behold vanity, to be as windowes, to let in vncleane thoughts into my heart? Haue I my body to vſe it to adultery, to defile it with beaſtly drunkennes, and to apply the ſeuerall parts thereof as *weapons of vnrighteouſnes* vnto him? Hath he made me able to heare, and ſhall I ſtop mine eares againſt his word? Hath he giuen me ſtrength and health, to goe and to trauaile, and ſhall I loyter when I ſhould goe to his houſe to be imployed in his ſeruice? Am I thus furniſhed through him, with wit and reaſon and capacity, and vnderſtanding, and ſhall I be apt in otherthings, and remaine dull and ignorant and blockiſh in the knowledge of his will? Am I able to remember and cary away ſuch things as concerne my ſelfe, and ſhall I not labour to make my memory a ſtorehouſe in which to lay vp ſuch holſome doctrine by which I may know how to walke in the waies of godlines? This would be the fruit of this meditation, if when we feele our owne power of life, and motion, of breathing, of hearing, of vnderſtanding, of remembring, we would conſider that we haue receiued al this from *Iehouah*, that ſame *Eternall Being*, and that therefore it would be an intolerable ſhame for vs, not to deuote all that is in vs to his glory, from whom we haue receiued it. [Rom. 6. 13.

A ſecond vſe of this ſecond ſignification of the word *Iehouah*, is to preſſe vpon vs a ſober and moderate vſe of Gods creatures. Euery thing is that which it is through him, he is the head-Lord of all, which made The 2. vſe.

all, which preſerueth all, which oweth all, and of his mercy and free grace he hath allowed the free vſe of his creatures for our neceſſary reliefe and lawfull delight; and *euery creature* (ſaith the Scripture) *is good if it be vſed with thanksgiuing* [r]. Now we may be ſure, that he who is the Author of euery *beeing*, and the maintainer of it, will take account of the waſtfull conſuming of that, which had a *beeing* through him. It is the honour of God, that all things *are* through his power, and be preſerued by his prouidence. Now though man, (ſo farre as his commiſſion reacheth,) may ſpend the bleſſings of God, and conſume them for his needfull vſe, yet, without authority to turne that into nothing, which God hath made to be ſomething, is more then any man ſhall be able to defend before God. It is a good point, to be thought vpon, by all thoſe, who for the ſatisfying of their carnall and beaſtly appetites, doe make hauocke and ſpoile of Gods good creatures; ſo, as doe drunkards, and quaffers, and ſuch to whom *their belly is their God* [u], and ſuch alſo as ſuperfluouſly waſt that which might well be ſpared, vpon the vnneceſſary trimming and dreſſing of themſelues. What haſt thou to doe, O thou man, to conſume that, by which the Lord accounts himſelfe honoured, that it is his creature? Thou art (I know) a freeholder here vpon the earth, and God hath made all things for thy vſe, but yet (that I may vſe a phraſe of law) not without impeachment of waſt: *That nothing be loſt*, it was one of our Sauiours Items [w]. The Lord hath granted thee a leaſe with a very large ſcope, but yet all is confined and ſhut vp with this prouiſo, Prouided alwaies that all things be vſed with ſobriety. Let vs remember this then: all things haue their *beeing* from God, and (as the Head of this great houſe, the world,) he will take account how thoſe things which he hath made to *be*, man hath made not to *be*; and the more liberall he is in miniſtring to our neceſſity, the more ſtrait he will

[r] 1. Tim. 4. 3.

[u] Phil. 3. 19.

[w] Ioh. 6. 12.

will be in punishing our superfluitie. These be the two vses of the second sense of the name *Iehouah*: It is he which giueth *Beeing* vnto all things; therefore our life is to be spent to his glory; therefore that which he hath made to be, is not to be wasted at our pleasure, without his speciall Authoritie.

The two Vses of the third signification of this word Iehouah.

He is thirdly called *Iehouah*, because he giueth *Beeing* to all his promises, all of them in their due time shal receiue their full accomplishment. This doth also teach vs two things: First, it serueth to be a strengthening to our faith, and an assurance to vs, that what mercie, or grace, or goodnes so euer God hath promised, it shall certenly be bestowed. It is as possible for the Lord, not to be God as not to keepe his word. Hath he promised that *whosoeuer beleeueth in Christ, shall haue life Eternall*? [x] hath he said, that he *which trusteth in him shal stand fast for euer*? [y] hath he testified of himselfe, that he *wil neuer faile thee nor forsake thee*? [z] that if thou *draw neere vnto him, he will draw neere vnto thee*? [a] that if thou *call vpon him in truth* [b], he will surely heare thee? that if thou obey him he will blesse thee? *Know* this; he cannot *alter the thing which is gone out of his lips* [c], it is not possible that any of these promises should fal to the ground vnfulfilled. This ought to be laid vp in store by al that feare God against the day of triall: Whatsoeuer we thinke in our Ignorance and securitie, yet if we belong to God, we shall at one time or other feele how hard a thing it is to beleeue Gods promises: Flesh and bloud, being helped forward by the deuil, will afford so many doubts, that we shall find much to doe, to ouercome our owne distrustfulnes, and to depend wholy vpon the Lord. Therefore let this euer be remembred, that the God in whom we beleeue his name is *Iehouah*, that is, one who alwaies giues issue to all promises. Wel he may deferre to fulfill them, for the exercise of our faith, and the triall of our patience, but it is vnpossible that he should finally

[x] Ioh. 3. 16.
[y] Psal. 125. 1.
[z] Heb. 13. 5.
[a] Iam. 4. 8.
[b] Psal. 145. 18.
[c] Psa. 89. 34.

ly disanull them.

The 2. Vse. [d] Eph. 5. 1.

The second vse of this point stands thus. We are exhorted to *be followers of God as deare children* [d]. As then God will not faile in any promise of mercie vnto vs, so should we make conscience not to faile in any promise of obedience vnto him. We promised in our Baptisme to forsake the diuel and all his workes, to walke in the way of Gods commandements. Euery time we come to the Lords table we renue this promise in these words (*And here we offer vp vnto thee, our selues, our soules, and our bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and liuely sacrifice vnto thee:*) What we doe priuately God knoweth, but euery time we meete together here, we make shew to begge grace *that we may liue a godly, righteous, and a sober life.* Now if we looke and hope that God should be constant in his promises to vs, it is great reason, that we should looke to the vowes with which we haue tied our selues to him. With what face can we lay any claime to the promises of Gods mercie, when the Lord shall haue such cause to except against vs, that we haue but dallied with him, professing to renounce the workes of Sathan, and yet walking after the course of the world like the children of disobedience, seeming desirous to liue soberly, righteously, and godly, & yet liuing in Ignorance, in excesse, in vanity, in profanenes, in contempt of all goodnes. Wherfore let vs labour herein to be like vnto God: whatsoeuer good he promiseth to vs, he will surely performe; the obedience which we haue vowed to him, let vs make conscience to practise.

The end of the first Sermon.

The second sermon.

Strong.

OF the first thing by which God is here described, namely, his *Essence* and *Beeing* we haue heard. We come now to the next, which is his power, in this word (*strong.*) And this point is worthy the examining, forasmuch as there is scarsely any one leafe or page in the whole Bible, in which there is not some mention made of the power & strength of God. I will follow this course in speaking of it. First, I will shew why and in what respects the Lord is called *Strong* or powerfull; and then next, of what vses this point touching Gods strength may be vnto vs.

The Lord is called a mighty, strong, or powerfull God, for three causes. First, because he doth mightily bring to passe whatsoeuer he will in the whole world, and besides, whatsoeuer he will not, or hath not decreed, the same he hindreth, confoundeth, and staieth, so that it can neuer take effect. Touching the former of these two branches, we haue the testimony of the Psalme, [a] *whatsoeuer pleased the Lord, that did he in heauen and in earth, in the sea, and in all the depths:* and for the latter, the speech of Salomon is expresse, *many deuises are in a mans heart, but the counsell of the Lord shall stand* [b]: the meaning is, that howsoeuer men doe plot and deuise and consult about many things, yet all their designes are ordered onely by the counsell and determination of the most high: That which he is pleased to cresse, all the strength of all the men in the world is not able to effect. How easily did the Lord confound the great enterprise of the sonnes of men combining together to build a tower, by which to ennoble them-

Why God is called strong. The 1. cause.

[a] Psal. 135. 6.

[b] Prou. 19. 21.

selues, and to perpetuate their names and memories among men [c]. A great assault was made against Lots house, *the men of Sodom compassed the house round about, from the young euen to the old, all the people from all quarters* [d], yet the Lord smote them sodenly with blindnes, and their attempt was vtterly in vaine. It was a dangerous conspiracy, that of Absalom against Dauid; *the treason was great* (saith the Text) *for the people increased still with Absalom* [e], so th at euen Dauid himselfe, *whose heart was as the heart of a Lyon* [f], was afraid; yet how soone was all this discomfited, it appeareth in the story at large. It were easie to alleadge many like examples. There is one which may serue in steed of a great many; I meane the Lord his mighty ouer-ruling and ouer-mastring the malice and power of the Deuil and his instruments, who had layd so dangerous and hellish a plot for the ouerthrow of all mankind, yet the power of God hath so vtterly defeated him, that the seruants of God may be bold in this case to vse the words of Dauid, [g] *His mischiefe shall returne vpon his owne head, and his cruelty shall fall vpon his owne pate.* This then is the first cause why God is called *strong*, whatsoeuer he willeth, that he effecteth, whatsoeuer he disliketh, that same he easely ouerthroweth. The second cause, is, because he bringeth all things to passe without any difficulty. His Willing a thing to be done, is the doing of it, his very beck (as it were) and nod, is sufficient to the effecting of such things, as he hath determined shall take place. We haue a plaine testimonie hereof in the creation of the world. For howsoeuer Epicures and Atheists, scoffe at the creation, and when they heare that God made all things, aske in derision, what instruments and leauers, and engines he had, yet the Scripture hath taught vs, that God made all things by his very word. *He commanded* (saith the Psalme) *and they were created* [h]. He said, *Let there be light, and there was light* [i]. *Let there be a firmament, &c. and it was so* [k]. And this is worthie

[c] Gen. 11.
[d] Gen. 19. 4.
[e] 2. Sam. 15. 12.
[f] 2. Sam. 17. 10.
[g] Psal. 7. 16.
The 2 cause
[h] Psal. 148. 5.
[i] Gen. 1. 3, 6, 7.

worthie the noting, as an argument of the ſtrength and power of God, that howſoeuer for the moſt part, he yſeth meanes for the bringing of theſe things to paſſe, which he hath determined, yet, leaſt we ſhould ſo far admire the meanes, as that in the meane time we ſhould aſcribe the leſſe vnto him that vſeth them, he doth ordinarily effect the greateſt things by the weakeſt and moſt vnlikely meanes. He brough the Iſraelites out of the Egyptian captiuity by Moſes and Aaron, two ſilly perſons (in mans opinion) to preuaile againſt ſo puiſſant a Prince as Pharaoh was [k]. Iericho, a mighty ſtrong citie, enuironed with ſtrong walles, ouerthrowne by the blaſts of trumpets [l]. Siſera the great commander vnder Iabin, King of Canaan, who held the Iſraelits in bondage twenty yeares, vanquiſhed by a Woman [m]. When God raiſed vp *Gideon* to deliuer the people from the Midianites, and *Gideon* had muſtered his men together, *the Lord ſaid, The people that are with thee, are to many for me to giue the Midianites into their hands.* In the warres of Princes it is thought, that the more ſtrength there is, and the greater multitude of fighting of men, the more likely-hood of victory; but yet God ſaid, the company was to great, knowing that the people would be readie to vaunt and to ſay, *mine hand hath ſaued me*: therefore the Lord brought them from two and thirty thouſand, to three hundred men. It was all one with him to ſaue with few as with many: and the ſmaller was the companie, the more glorious was the victorie. But in matters of grace & ſaluation, the matter is much more apparant, how *ſtrong* God is to doe great matters by weake inſtruments. The worke is great, to *loſe the workes of the diuel* [o], to vanquiſh death, to kill ſinne, to appeaſe Gods iuſtice, to call men to knowledge, to beget faith in their hearts: but let vs conſider, by how weake meanes (in ſhew) all theſe things are effected; God ſends his ſonne into the world: Well; in what manner, and after what faſhion commeth he? Very

[k] Pſal. 77. 20.
[l] Ioſhu. 6. 20.
[m] Iudg. 4. 21.
[n] Iudg. 7. 2.
[o] Ioh. 3. 8.

poorely and very meanly: the place of his birth, a *ſtable*, the cradle, a *cratch*, the firſt to whom it was reuealed, *Shepeheards* [p], Chriſt himſelfe in the whole courſe of his life wanting all things which might grace him among men. He had ſmall wealth, his retinue was very thinne, and conſiſting of men of no note in the worlds opinion, a man hated, and ſcorned, and deſpiſed among the great ones of the Times, perſecuted to the death, arraigned as a malefactour, ſcoffed at, vſed moſt deſpitefully, condemned to be executed among thieues. This meanes might ſeeme very vnlikely to deliuer mankind from the captiuity and thraldome of the diuell. And yet (bleſſed be this *ſtrong Iehouah*) we ſee how his *power was made perfect through* this great *weakneſs* [q]. This deſpiſed man, yea a *Worme and not a man* [r], by contempt, procured our glory, by dying, ſubdued death, by being condemned, acquited vs, by becomming *poore*, hath *made vs rich* [s], by *taking on him the forme of a ſeruant* [t], hath reſtored vs into liberty, by being *made ſinne* [u], hath remooued the guilt of our ſinne, by becomming a *curſe* [x], hath made vs *heires of bleſſing* [x]. *This is the Lords doing, and it is marueilous in our eyes* [y]. Proceed yet: Chriſt aſcending vp into heauen, purpoſed the conuerſion of the world, the calling of the Gentiles, the gathering of his particular and choſen people, vnto himſelfe: Whom choſe he, and what ones doth he daily chuſe vnto this ſeruice? not Angels, though they be all at his ſeruice, but men like vnto vs. And what muſt they doe to conuert ſoules? The wiſe men of the world looke for ſome great matter, which might breed aſtoniſhment. But what is it? Heare the Apoſtle? *It pleaſed God by the fooliſh-nes of preaching to ſaue them that beleeue* [a]. Here is a poore meanes (as a man would thinke) to conuert ſoules: and yet is it *the arme* [b] and *power of God vnto ſalvation, to every one that beleeueth* [c]. Thus haue you the ſecond cauſe why God is called *ſtrong*: whatſoeuer he willeth, that he effecteth, without difficulty; many

p Luk.2.7.8. &c.
q 2.Cor.12.9.
r Pſal.22.6.
s 2.Cor.8.9.
t Phil.2.7.
u 2.Cor.5.21.
x Gal.3.13.
x1. Pet.3.9.
y Pſal.118.23.
a 1.Cor.1.21.
b Iſa.53.1.
c Rom.1.16.

times

times without meanes; generally by weake meanes, to the end that the excellencie of his owne power might appeare. The third cause why he is tearmed *Strong*, is because he can do more, then either he doth, or wil do. *God is able of these stones to raise vp children vnto Abraham* said Iohn Baptist [d]. This God could doe, but he was not pleased to doe. And in another place, when Christ was apprehended, and Peter began to make resistance, *Put vp* (said he) *thy sword into his place, thinkest thou, that I can not now pray to my father, & he will giue me more then twelue Legions of Angels* [e]. By which words our Sauiour sheweth, that both he could haue asked his father, and that his father was able thus to haue supplied him, but yet neither of them for the time would doe that, which they were able to haue done. The like might be shewed in other specialties, but these may suffice. And thus you vnderstand the reasons, for which God is called *strong*. First, what he will he effecteth, and crosseth the contrary. Secondly, that which he willeth he easily accomplisheth. Thirdly, his power is not limited to that which he doth, but he is able to doe much more, if it so seeme good vnto his Maiesty.

The 3. cause.

[d] Math. 3. 9.

[e] Math. 26. 52. 53.

Before I come to make vse of this doctrine, I must shew with what exceptions it must be vnderstood. For notwithstanding this infinite strength and power of God, some things there are which God cannot doe, as namely, he cannot sinne, he *cannot lie* saith the Apostle [f], and in another place, *he cannot denie himselfe* [g]. It is as vnpossible that these things should come frō the nature of God, as it is, that the light of the Sunne should bring darknes, or that a white colour should make that thing black to which it is applyed. If you aske me now, how can God then be said to be of so great strength, seeing you haue named some things which he cannot do; I answer, that his beeing not able to doe these things, doth argue the infiniteness of his power. It is weaknes in vs that we sinne, it is fulnes of power in him that

[f] Tit. 1. 2.

[g] 2. Tim. 2. 13.

he cannot sinne. It is the great power of God, that he cannot lie [h]; If he could lie, deceiue, or be deceiued, he were not omnipotent [i]. Againe, God cannot doe those things which imply a contradition, as namely, to make a thing to be and not to be both at an instant, or to make that which hath beene not to haue beene. It is a good saying to this purpose of a learned man [k], Whosoeuer (saith he) saith thus; If God be omnipotent, let him make those things not to be done, which haue already beene done; that man doth not consider, that it is all one, as if he should say; If he be omnipotent, let him bring to passe that those things which are true, may be false, euen in the same respect for which they are true. And againe [l], This sentence (saith he) by which we say, that this or that hath beene, is therefore true, because that whereof we speake, now is not: This sentence God cannot make to be false, because he is not contrary to the truth. And this is to be obserued against those of the Church of Rome, who for that grosse opinion of theirs, touching Christ his bodily presence in the Sacrament, pleade Gods omnipotencie [m]. He (saith they) is almighty and *strong*, able to doe any thing, and therefore able to doe this also, albeit we cannot conceiue it. Now we must obserue, that though God be *strong* (as I haue shewed) yet this is none of the things for which he is so called, because it doth necessarily imply a contradiction. For it is in the nature of a body, to be within the compasse of one place onely at one time. Now, for Christs body at one and the same instant of time, to retaine the nature of a true body, and yet withall to be in diuers places, and not subiect to sense, it is as vnpossible, as it is for him to haue a body, and to haue no body, to be Christ, and not to be Christ all at one moment. Besides, it is a good rule, that, when we speake of that power of God which the learned cal his actual or working power, we must not seuer it from his reuealed will. It is a worthy

[h] magna est de potentia non posse mentiri. Aug. de Trin. l. 15. c. 15.

[i] Aug. de sym. l. 1. c. 1.

[k] Aug. contra. Faustum Manich. l. 26. c. 8.

[l] Idem ibidem, paulo post.

[m] So doth Andradius and others.

worthy speech of our *Sauiour* to the Saduces[n], *ye are deceiued, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* What soeuer we perceiue to be his will, there we must make [illegible] of accomplishment: where there is no euidence of his will, there we may not presume of his ordinary power. The Papists therefore who in this point of their transubstantiation, so much vrge Gods power, let them (if they can) prooue it to be Gods will, to make such a supernaturall alteration, otherwise their argument fetched from the Power of God, cannot help them. Thus much touching the doctrine of the *Strength of Iehouah*, let vs proceede to the vses, which may be commended vnto vs out of this doctrine.

[n] Math. 22. 29.

The first vse is, to worke and frame vs to a standing in awe of Gods Maiesty, and to a feare of continuing in any such course as may displease him. This is prooued out of that saying of Peter[o], *Humble your selues therefore* (saith he); there is counsell to cast downe our selues in all humility before God; then there is a reason for it, because his *hand is mighty*, he can doe what soeuer pleaseth him. Like vnto this is that speach of our Sauiour [p], *Feare him which is able to destroy both body & soule in hell*: as if he had said, *you see what God can doe, hell fire is at his commaund to cast both bodies and soules into it, therefore take heede how you offend him, he was neuer yet ouermastred. It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God*[q]. Reason it selfe teacheth thus much; to beware of angring him who is able double and treble to requite vs. A tenant is afraid to offend his Lord, he is readie to ride and goe for him, and to doe him any seruice: and why? he knowes he is able to doe him a displeasure: Nay the borrower, although he payes full dearely for the loane, yet is euen afraid of the lender, and speakes him faire, least he should bring him into some extremitie. They of *Tyrus* and *Sidon* (saith the story) *came with one accord and desired peace of Herod*: and what was the cause? *their countrey was nourished by the*

The 1. Vse.

[o] 1. Pet. 5. 6.

[p] Math. 10. 28.

[q] Heb. 10. 31.

r Act. 12. 20. Kings land r. Thus the light of nature hath taught to feare, where there is power to reuenge. But in matters of religion it is not so. There are many things touching which it is euident in Scripture both what God can doe, and what he will doe. Concerning his will, we well know what he hath expresly spoken of many sinnes. *If ye will not be reformed by me, but walke stubbornely against me, then will I also walke stubbornely against you* s. *He that when he heareth the words of the curse, blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall haue peace, &c. the Lord will not be mercifull vnto him,* t *&c. Be not deceiued, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, &c. shall inherite the Kingdome of God* u. Many such euidences there are touching the will and purpose of God, touching those which *walke in their sinnes* x. Now if to these and to the like sayings, we adde that which is spoken here touching his *Strength*, (he wants abilitie to doe nothing which he hath a will to execute) we shall well perceiue, that these speeches are no fear-crowes, or idle threates, but shall come to passe as certainely, as we doe heare them spoken vnto vs in Gods word. Yet when the Scripture is so full touching the concurrence of these two; Gods purpose to punish, & his power to punish, who amongst vs (notwithstanding) is afraid to run vpon the pikes of of both these? It seemes, either that we thinke that it is but an idle tale which is spoken touching Gods purpose to take vengeance, or els that we are at a point & doe not care for the extremity of his power. How is it possible, that men beleeuing the Scripture, which saith that God will turne into hell all proud contemners of his word, all neglecters of his worship, all swearers, all prophaners of the Sabbath, all malicious persons, all wantons, all belly-gods, all couetous ones, all oppressors, all guilefull persons, how (I say) can it be, that men beleeuing this, & thinking also that there is no impossibility with God, to make good that which he hath said, should notwithstanding liue in these sins, delight in their

s Leu. 26. 23. 24.

t Deu. 29. 19. 20.

u 1 Cor. 6. 9. 10.

x Psal. 68. 21.

glory,

& boast of them, defend them, hate those that admonish them, maligne those which goe about to reforme them? Well, yet whatsoeuer prophane men imagine, *thinking God to be like them* x, the matter is euident inough, both touching the will of God, and touching his power; if he be wanting in either, he is not God: therefore let vs all know this; If we learne not to feare Gods power, we shall surely feele it, he vseth to say nothing, but that which he both will and can performe.

x Psal. 50. 21.

The 2. vse.

The second vse is fitly to be annexed to the former, as a motiue to encourage vs now at the last to come out of those sinnes in which we haue so long continued. True it is, it is a dangerous thing for a man to hold out in any one knowne sinne, as namely, to haue beene a swearer, a railer, a cursed speaker, a scorner of religion, a drunkard, a vicious person, a deceiuer, a long time, for many yeares together: I say this is a dangerous case, and the sinne of that man is exceeding grieuous in the sight of God, which hath so long cleaued vnto him: yet for all that, if we will yet become new creatures, and truely repent vs for our liues past, God is *Strong*, able to pardon vs, able to renue vs, able to bring vs out of the power of Sathan, out of the bondage and captiuity of sinne. Paul saith of the Iewes, that are now rut off from Christ through vnbeleefe, and haue so continued in enmity against him, these many hundred yeares, *if they abide not still in vnbeliefe, they shall be graffed in*: and what is his reason? *God is able to graffe them in againe* y: there Paul fetcheth an argument from the strength of God. So in this case, though it be a fearefull thing to haue continued twenty, thirty, or more yeares in an euill course, yet if at last we shall returne, and seeke the Lord in humility, God is *strong* to forgiue, *strong* to saue, it passeth not his power *to put away our transgressions like a cloud* z, and to make them, although they were *red like Scarlet*, yet to become *as woole*. a

y Rom. 11. 23.

z Isa. 44. 22.

a Isa. 1. 18.

The 3. vse.

Thirdly, that the Lord is a *strong God*, it is a doctrine of very

very especiall & singular cõfort, to all that feare him, & put their trust in his mercy: because it is an assurance to them that they shall neuer perish, and that the gates of hell shall neuer be able to preuaile against the least member of Christ Iesus. The elect of God are in this life mightily beset; it is (as I may so speake) the principall part of the deuills busines, to deuise how he may hazard and entrap their soules. When they looke into themselues, they shall see no meanes of resistance, but a readines rather in their owne nature to entertaine euery bayte which Sathan layeth, and to yield to euery sinne which he shall perswade, so that they have iust cause, considering their owne weaknes, and comparing it with the power of the spiritual aduersary, to cry out as Elisha his seruant did, when he saw an host had
b 2.King.6.15. compassed the citie, *Alas, what shall we doe* [b]. But now in this case, the *strength* and power of their good God,
c Heb.6.19. *is the sure and stedfast ancre of their soule* [c]. Here is their comfort, euen as Elisha answered his seruant, *They*
d 2.King.6.16. *that be with vs, are more then they that be with them* [d]. And this vse Christ himselfe teacheth vs to make: For, speaking of the certenty of the saluation of his elect, he speaketh thus, *I giue to my sheepe eternall life, and they shall neuer perish, neither shall any plucke them out of my hand:* And what is his reason? It is grounded vpon the *strength* and power of God, *my father which gaue them me is greater then all, and none is able to take them out of my fathers*
e Ioh.10.28.29. *hand* [e]. This is that which Paul calleth *the foundation of*
f 2.Tim.2.19. *the Lord which remaineth sure* [f]. Well may the deuill striue and bestirre himselfe, and exercise the vtmost of his hellish power, but it is all in vaine. The chosen of God are borne out by an high hand, and in despight of
g 1.Pet.1.5. Sathan, are *kept by the power of God through faith vnto saluatiõ* [g]. Nay the power of the deuill is in this case so yoked & ouerruled by the power of God, that as the bloudyminded *Haman*, that thirsted after nothing so much as the bloud of *Mordecai*, was yet forced by the kings com-

commaundement, to be the chiefe in the gracing and honouring of *Mordecai* [h]. Euen so Sathan likewise (whose mouth is euer open to deuour) is compelled to aduance and further the saluation of Gods people, and is but (as it were) the rod in the hand of God, to chasten and to humble them, and to bring them neere vnto heauen. Saint Iohn speaking of the danger of false teachers, by which many were misled, comforts the beleeuers against them, and assureth them, that it was not possible for them finally to be corrupted by them; and he groundeth his reason vpon Gods power, *Greater is he which is in you, then he which is in the world* [i], that is, Christ Iesus, dwelling in you by his spirit, is mightier and stronger then the spirit of Sathan, which sitteth in the tongues of seducers, and therefore to you, who are vpheld by his power, there is no danger. Thus the doctrine of Gods *strength* is a store-house of comfort to Gods seruants, be their wants neuer so great, be their meanes of ease neuer so small or vnlikely, be their hopes in regard of outward helpes neuer so slender, the difficulties, through which they must passe neuer so many, yet here is their stay, *Faithfull is he which hath called vs, which will also doe it* [k]. This was the ground of Abrahams faith; he was *fully assured, that he which had promised, was also able to doe it* [l]. The like was Pauls resolution, *I know whome I haue beleeued, and I am perswaded, that he is able to keepe that which I haue committed to him, against that day* [m]. He hath made great proceedings in religion, and precious is his soule in Gods sight, who hath learned to build vpon this foundation.

[h] Hester 6.
[i] 1. Ioh. 4. 4.
[k] 1. Thes. 5. 24.
[l] Rom. 4. 21.
[m] 2. Tim. 1. 12.

Now to the end we may rightly apply this forenamed vse, we must ioyne to it another consideration, namely, we must labour to find in our selues, and to feele in our owne soules the experience of Gods power. If you demaund of me, what kind of feeling it is which I speake of, in regard that euen the diuels and damned soules, haue a feeling of Gods power, I refer you

you to an excellent place of Pauls [n]; where the Apostle is a suter to God on the behalfe of the Ephesians, that he would giue them the spirit of wisedome, to the end they might know *the exceeding greatnes of Gods power towards beleeuers, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ.* Marke the place well. The Apostle would haue vs to feele in our selues that *power of God*, where of Christ Iesus in the daies of his flesh (as he was man) had experience. Christ vpon the crosse died the first death, which is the separation of the body frome the soule; he suffred also in his soule the sorrowes of the second death, so much as was possible for such a soule as his was, to apprehend them. After his bodily death, he was laid in the grace, where death might seeme (as it were) to triumph ouer him three daies. Now herein god shewed his power, in that he loosed the sorrowes of the graue, and raised him vp againe from death to life. This is a speciall part of that power of God which he wrought in Christ. Now the thing which Paul aymed at, (and which I doe aime at also in vrging his words) was and is, that we should labour to feele the very same strength and power of God in our selues. How may that be (will some man say?) Euen thus. That naturall corruption which is in vs, is (as it were) our graue, and as a man lyeth dead in his graue and cannot moue, so are we by *nature dead in trespasses and sinnes* [o], and euen *reprobate to euery good work* [p]. As therefore God did manifest his power, in raising vp Christ, so we should also endeauour to haue in our selues a feeling of the same power, in raising vs vp from the graue of sinne vnto newnes of life. This is that which Paul calleth by this name, *The vertue of Christs resurrection* [q], and for the gaining here of he *counted all things but as dung*, euen that he might secretly feele that power whereby Christ was raised, to raise vp him also from the bondage of his sinnes. Now to apply this. Thou hast heard of the *strength* and power of *Iehouah*, and

[n] Eph.1.19.20.

[o] Eph.2.1.

[p] Tit.1.16.

[q] Phil.3.10.

thou

thou haſt bene taught to make this vſe of it; to reſolue thereby of the certenty of thy ſaluation, becauſe his *ſtrength* is ſuch as can not be ouer-maſtred. If thou wouldſt truely take comfort in this, it behoueth thee to looke into thy ſelfe, to ſee what experience thou haſt of the power of God in raiſing thee out of the bondage and ſlauery of thine owne corruption. If thou art ſtill in captiuity to thine old wonted courſes, there is no change, no newnes in thee, ſtill thou art one manner of man, no encreaſing in knowledge, no renuing in the inner man, no reformation of life, ſtill an ignorant man, ſtill a deſpiſer of good things, ſtill a worldling, ſtill a walker after thine owne luſts, ſtill like the *blacke more, whoſe ſkin* being often waſhed, *is not chaunged*. [r] I muſt tell thee plainely and truely; this vſe touching the certenty of ſaluation grounded vpon Gods power, appertaines not to thee; well thou maieſt feele the ſtrong arme of God, in plunging thee into hell, but thou ſhalt neuer feele his gratious and mercifull power in ſauing thee from deſtruction. If thou wouldeſt then find any ſweetnes in this, that God is ſo *ſtrong* in preſeruing his ſeruants ſoules, that none can pluck them from him, labour to feele that power in raiſing thee from ſin, which the Lord ſhewed in raiſing vp Chriſt from the graue, a power (I ſay) killing thy corruption, and raiſing thee vp to newnes of life. And ſo much for this, that *Iehouah* is *ſtrong*.

[r] Ier. 13. 23.

The end of the ſecond Sermon.

The third Sermon.

Mercifull, and gratious, slow to anger, and abundant in goodnes and truth, Reseruing mercy for thousands, and forgiuing Iniquity, and transgression, and sinne.

I AM in this sermon to speake of the third thing by which God is described, namely his mercy. A point of that largenes, that I may sooner find entrance into it, then measure in it. The Scripture saith, that *all Gods pathes are mercy* [a], *The earth is full of it, so is the sea great and wide* [b], *It reacheth to the heauens* [c], *It is ouer all his workes* [d]. The Lord hath stepped no where in heauen, earth, or sea, but he hath left some prints of his mercy behind him. No heart can conceiue it, the tongue of men and Angels, cannot vtter it. It is so infinite that no affection in nature, no Proportion in the whole world hath beene found fit to expresse it. The *height of heauen aboue the earth* [e], the *distance of East from the West* [f], the *loue of fathers towards their children* [g], of *mothers to the fruit of their wombe* [h], of *nurses to sucklings* [i], of *Eagles to their young ones* [k], of *Hens to their Chickens* [l], all these haue beene but shadowes to it, but no sufficient measures by which to skanne it. But, (that I may not wander from my Text) we must obserue, that the mercy of God stands in two things, *Giuing*, and *Forgiuing*. The former all Gods creatures tast of: *Thou Lord dost saue both man and beast* [m]. The latter is peculiar onely to his Elect: *He is the Sauiour of all men, specially of them that beleeue* [n]. The first is the larger, but the latter is the more excellent; and of it the spirit of God especially speaketh

a Psal. 25. 10.
b Psa. 104. 24. 25.
c Psa. 36. 5.
d Psa. 145. 9.
e Psa. 103. 11.
f ver. 12.
g ver. 13.
h Isa. 66. 13.
i Isa. 49. 15.
k Exod. 19. 4.
l Math. 23. 37.
m Psal. 36. 6.
n 1 Tim. 4. 10.

speaketh in this place.

In treating of it, I will open the particular words and clauses, by which this sweete propriete of Gods nature is laid out vnto vs. And then I will apply my selfe wholly to shew what vse we must make of the doctrine of Mercie.

The order of this sermon.

Touching this propertie of Gods nature there are here fiue branches. The first is *Mercifull*. The word in the Hebrew, which in our tongue is translated (*mercifull*) is drawne from a roote which signifieth *the bowels*; to note vnto vs, (that I may speake of God as of a man for our capacities sake) how *tender-hearted* the Lord is, and how he doth (as we say) *condole* our miseries, & euen inwardly commiserate, and pitie our estate. Vnto remember the speech in the Prophet, where the Lord is pleased (to make vs the better to conceiue of his mercie) to take to himselfe the affections of a man, and that he might signifie how little pleasure he tooke in the forsaking of his people, & how willing he would be vpon repentance to receiue them, he saith, *his bowels were troubled for Ephraim*, as who would say, it wounded him, that he should euen be forced by their vntowardnes to deale so straightly with them. The like to this is intended in the language of the new Testament, according as it is said of Christ, that *when he saw the multitude, his bowels yearned within him, because they were dispersed, as sheepe hauing no shepheard*. This is the meaning of the first branch, God is merciful, that is, he aboundeth in compassion, and is (as the Psalme saith) a *pitifull God*.

The seuerall branches opened.

1. Mercifull.

Ier. 31. 20.

p Math. 9. 36.

The second branch is *Gratious*. The word in the true and native signification of it, doth import vnto vs touching God thus much: That he doth freely and willingly, and (as I may so speake) with a kind of forwardnes, do good and shew kindnes vnto men: as who would say, it were a kind of reioycing to him to haue occasion to shew mercie. Like vnto that which Saint Iames saith, that *God giueth to all*

q Psa. 86. 15.

2. Gratious.

askers liberally, or, with a francke heart, and vpbraideth no man[t]. It is no burden to him to afford his fauour, he is neuer wearie of shewing kindnesse. This is *Gracious*.

[t] Iam.1.5.

3. Slow to anger. The third is, *Slow to anger*, that is to say, a God, who though he cannot abide iniquitie, yet is full of patience, suffering long, and not proceeding to extremitie, vntill he be by mens impenitencie euen vrged thereunto. How slow was he with the old world, and for how long did his *spirit striue with man*[u], stopping the course of vengeance, as long as it might stand with the honour of his iustice to forbeare. In the Psalme so ordinarily read vnto vs, it is said, that he suffered the Israelites in the *wildernesse forty yeares*[x]. *Many a time did they prouoke him by their counsels*, saith *Dauid*[y]. It was long before he suffered his wrath to breake out, yea, and when he did giue way to his iustice, he *did oft times call backe his anger, and did not shewe vp all his wrath*[z]. In *Esay*, he is said, *to waite that he may haue mercie*[a]. And his slowenesse to anger is so great, that the world accounts it *slackenesse*[b], and because of his long remitting, doe thinke that he will neuer iudge, but either is not, or else hath left euery man to his owne libertie. This is *Slow to anger*; he is often prouoked, he is daily vrged, yet he is patient towards all.

[u] Gen.6.3.

[x] Psal.95.10.

[y] Psal.106.43.

[z] Psal.78.38.

[a] Isa.30.18.

[b] 2.Pet.3.9.

4. Abundant in goodnes and truth. The fourth is, *Abundant in goodnesse and truth*. By *goodnesse*, is meant a disposition euen with kindnesse to winne mens hearts, and by blessings to allure them to himselfe: and by *truth* is vnderstood, fidelitie and constancie in his promises, without failing: so that touching *Iehouah* in this clause, is said thus much, namely, that as he doth forbeare to doe that which in iustice he might do, beeing so much prouoked by vs; so he doth also prouoke vs by his benefites to returne vnto him; and beeing a God which *cannot lie*[z], he hath eyed himselfe by promise to accept our submission, and when we repent to be ready to receiue vs. Thus doth he *abound in goodnesse and truth*.

[z] Tit.1.2.

5. Reseruing mercie for thousands. The fifth branch is, *Reseruing mercie for thousands*.

This serueth to shewe vs, that his mercie is euerlasting, like a fountaine euer springing, which can neuer be drawne drie. There is no earthly king, although his treasure were like *Salomons*, who *gaue siluer as Hierusalem as stones*[a], yet if he should keepe no measure in his guiings, his coffers would soone be emptied, and his millions of wealth drawne into a litle summe: but yet the Lords *mercie* is without bottome, it is a store that cannot be spent, it is a lampe fed with the oyle of immortalitie, that can neuer be consumed. The last branch is, *Forgiuing iniquitie, and transgression, and sinne.* This is (as it were) the very life and soule of Gods mercie, and the thing to which all the former aymed. Let vs examine the meanings. First, here are three things named, or rather one thing called by three names. By the first here translated *Iniquitie*, is meant that vniuersall corruption of nature, which we haue all drawne from Adam, as from a root, and in which (as *Dauid* speaketh) we are all *conceiued*[b]. By the second, called *Transgression*, is vnderstood euery outward act, properly signifying a *falling away from God*, because it is a shaking off of that due obedience which we owe vnto him. By the third, termed *Sinne*, is signified a higher degree of euill, as namely, when men are growne hard in sinne, and doe commit it without feare, making no reckoning of reproofe. These three are the very same degrees spoken of in the first Psalme: the first is, *the counsell of the vngodly*, the spring of corruption which is in euery naturall heart: the second is, *the way of sinners*, when men breake forth into outward enormities: the third, is the *chaire of pestilence*, when they are become shameles, and are resolute to liue at the mercy of their owne good. Now the Lord speaking of *forgiuing*, names these three degrees, to shew, that there is no sinne so haynous, whether naturall corruption, or outward transgression, or stiffe-necked presumption, but (vpon repentance) the mercie of God is able and ready to remit it. This is that

which

[a] 1. King 10. 27

6. Forgiuing iniquitie, and transgression, and sinne.

[b] Psal. 51. 5.

which is intended in these three termes, *Iniquity, transgression, sinne*. Let vs now see what it is to *forgiue*. God is said to *forgiue*, when he doth esteeme our sinnes as though they had neuer beene committed, meaning neuer to call vs to any account or reckoning for the same. For this cause God speaking in the Scripture of *forgiuenes*, to signifie the true meaning thereof, vseth these manner of speaches; *I haue put away thy transgressions as a cloude, and thy sinnes as a mist*[e]; meaning that as the strength & heate of the sunne, dissolueth the cloudes and disperseth the mists, that they appeare not, so the bright beames of Gods fauour doe banish away sinne, that it is neuer after to be seene. In another place, *I will forgiue their iniquitie, and remember their sinnes no more*[d]. Againe, *In those dayes* (saith the Lord) *the iniquitie of Israel shalbe sought for, and there shall be none, and the sinnes of Iudah, and they shall not be found*[e]. To this end God is said to *cast sinnes behind his backe*[f], and into the *bottome of the sea*[g]. These manner of speeches the Scripture vseth to shew what it is to *forgiue*, euen to make such a small and through riddance of our sinnes, as that they shall neuer be brought into iudgement against vs to condemne vs. The foundation of this forgiuenes of sin, is the merit of Christ; *In him we haue redemption through his blood the forgiuenes of sinnes*[h]. To make this manifest, how by, and for Christ sinnes are forgiuen, we must consider, that in sinne there are three things. The first is, the offence it selfe, the straying and aberration from the will of God, by which God is offended. The second is, the guilt, by which the party offending is liable vnto eternall punishment. The third is, the Blot, the corruption, the staine, which the sinne committed leaues and imprints in the offender, as a fruit by which followeth an apnes & proneness in the heart either to the same sinne, or to any other. These three are abolished by the merit of Christ. The fault is remoued by his obedience: The guilt is taken away by his suffe-

[e] Isa.44.22.
[d] Ier.31.34.
[e] Ier.50.20.
[f] Isa.38.19.
[g] Mich.7.19.
[h] Col.1.14.

rings:

rings: The Corruption hidden by his Holines, and the very being of it, daily diminished by the strength and power of his spirit. If any man aske how this can be, I answer, that it commeth to passe, by that which we call Imputation, by which there is a kind of translation or putting ouer of the beleeuers sinnes vnto Christ, and againe, of Christs righteousnes to the beleeuer: Christs obedience is accounted the Obedience of the beleeuer: His sufferings, the sufferings of the beleeuer. His holines the holinesse of the beleeuer. The right vnderstanding of this point, is the very staffe of all true comfort in religion. Thus I haue opened those sixe seuerall branches, by which the nature of Gods infinite mercie is described: The summe of all is this: He is a God full of compassion and pitying our miseries, a God who delighteth in *mercie*, and vouchsafeth his grace without grudging: one who is not easily prouoked, but suffereth long, prouoking rather by blessings euen the most obstinate, to returne, & binding himselfe by his promises to accept their submission; neither can the riches of his *mercie* be consumed, he hath inough in store for thousands; and whatsoeuer the euill be, whether the corruption of our nature, or the sinfulnes of our sinnes, or our insolent and presumptuous carriage towards him, all is one, it is soone swallowed vp in the bottomlesse gulfe of his mercie, if the hainous colour of it were as deepe as the *skarlet*, he will make it *white as the snow* before him [i]. This is the true sense and meaning of this description. Let vs now come to make vse of this heauenly & gracious doctrine of Gods *mercy*. But first I must shew you two things, 1. the necessitie of this doctrine: 2. to what kind of people it appertaines.

[i] Isa. 1. 18.

Concerning the necessitie of this doctrine, it may (perhaps) seeme to some (the loosenesse of the times considered) not so fitting, and that the men of this generation do need rather that one should come among them *with a rod*, then *in the spirit of meekenesse* [k]. I confesse

The necessitie of the doctrine touching Gods mercie.

[k] 1. Cor. 4. 21.

that our age is a forlorne age, and that iniquitie hath got the vpper hand, I know also, that *pearles must not be cast before swine*, *nor the childrens bread giuen to whelps*[m], yet I know too, that the spouse of Christ must not be robbed of this pearle, nor Gods children abridged of their necessarie food. Christ himselfe is a *stone to stumble at, and a rocke of offence* to some, yet to others he is *elect and precious*[n], and we must haue more respect to one humbled and broken-hearted sinner, then to *ninetie nine* which know not what belongs to *repentance*[o]. As concerning the necessitie of this doctrine therefore, this I say, it is an easie thing to abuse Gods *mercie*, but a hard thing to lay hold vpon Gods *mercie*: To presume vpon Gods graciousnes, is a thing soone done, but to be wel grounded in the assurance of Gods loue, is a matter of more difficultie. I desire no better witnes herein, then a troubled soule, a wounded spirit, one that seeth the horror of sinne, and feeleth (as it were) the very scorching of hell fire, whose conscience is set vpon the rack: such an one will tell you, what a hard matter it is to be perswaded of Gods *mercie*. If you thinke I make a wrong supposition, looke vpon Dauid; A man would thinke that such an one as he was, should neuer haue beene brought to such a straight, as to haue doubted of Gods fauour, yet here what himselfe saith, *I said in my hast, I am cast out of thy sight*[p], and, *Will the Lord absent himselfe for euer, will he shew no more fauour?*[q] and in another place, *I said in my feare, all men are lyars*[r], he thought that Samuel the prophet, and all other that had preached to him of the *mercie* of God, had vtterly deluded him. And, we find what great reasoning he had with his owne soule, before he could be perswaded of Gods goodnes towards him; *Why art thou cast down my soule, waite on God*[s]; much adoe he had before he could ouercom his own distrustfulnes. But what should I speake of him? Looke vpon Christ in the daies of his flesh, when he *bare our sinnes*[t],

l Math. 7. 6.
m Mat. 15. 26.
n 1. Pet. 2. 6. 8.
o Luc. 15. 7.
p Ps. 31. 22.
q Psal. 77. 7. 8.
r Ps. 116. 11.
s Ps. 42. 5. 11.

sinnes[t], and was *made a curse* for vs[u], what a combat he had betwixt the apprehension of Gods wrath due to vs, and the setled perswasion of his *mercie*, the speech vttered by him may testifie. For as before, in the garden, he not onely *began to waxe sorowfull*[w], and *to be afraid*[x], but also indeed to be *in an agonie*, so that his *sweat was like drops of blood*[y]; so, after vpon the crosse, he cried out in the anguish of his soule, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*[z]! So that by this appeareth the necessitie of well opening and prouing this doctrine, because out of these examples I may be bold to assure thee, that whatsoeuer thou now securely doest imagine, or whatsoeuer thou thinkest of others, who are troubled in mind, and vexed in spirit, if thou doest belong to God, thou shalt find it the hardest thing that thou euer vndertookest, to be perswaded, that notwithstanding the multitude and grossenesse of thy sinnes, yet God will receiue thee vnto *mercie*. This may cleare this point, touching the necessitie of this doctrine.

t 1. Pet. 2. 24.
u Gal. 3. 13.
w Math. 26. 37.
x Mar. 14. 33.
y Luc. 22. 44.
z Math. 27. 46.

The parties to whom it belongs.

Now for the parties to whom it belongs, that is a point which must be added also: for though no truth which God hath reuealed must be secreted, yet al truth must warily be deliuered. The doctrine of Gods *mercie* is to be taught with that caution and discretion, that if any man do abuse it, the fault may be his owne, and the occasion of presuming may be found to be rather taken by him, then giuen to him. For the thing it selfe therefore, this I say: This doctrine is the Gospell, and the Gospell is *glad-tidings*[a]: but to whom? *To all the people* said the Angell to the shepheards, that is, to those which pertaine to Gods chusing. More plainely: it is *glad-tidings, to the poore, to be broken-harted, to them that mourne*[b]: to such this present place of Scripture appertaines (in respect of the comfort of it) & to no others. A man can neuer know the length, and depth, & breadth, and height of Gods *mercy*, vntil he

a Luk. 2. 10.
b Isa. 61. 1, 3.

the length, & depth, & breadth, & height of his own misery. If thou be a man of a contrite heart, that trēblest at Gods iustice, that groanest vnder the burden of thy sins, and seest the wofulnes of thy estate, then this doctrine appertaines to thee, it is thy soule that I must speake vnto, I am sure it will be *health to thy nauill, and marow to thy bones* [c], and will make thy heart to leap within thee, as Maries voice made the babe spring in the wombe of Elizabeth [d]. But if thou be a man of litle feeling, that hast no true touch, that art euen frozen in the dregs of thine owne security, and blessest thy selfe without a cause, I say to thee then as Peter said to *Simon Magus, Thou hast neither part nor fellowship in this businesse* [e], there is another song to be sung to thee, and that is it which followeth in my text touching the Iustice of God, and thou shalt be forced to *wring out euen the dregs of that red wine* of Gods indignation [f], but of the cup of mercy and saluation, thou shalt not tast. And thus hauing shewed the necessity of this doctrine, and who they be to whom it doth truely and onely appertaine: I come now to declare vnto you what is the true vse of Gods *Mercie*.

c Prou.3.8.

d Luk.1.44.

e Act.8.21.

f Psal.75.8.

The principall vse of the doctrine of Gods mercie.

The chiefe vse of Gods *Mercy* in one word is this, euen to draw men to repentance. *Knowest thou not* (saith the Apostle) *that the bountifulnes of God leadeth thee to repentance* [g]? *The Lord is not slacke in his promise (as some) but is patient towards vs* (saith Peter); And why? *because he would haue vs come to repentance* [h]. These are proofes sufficient for this point. Onely for the clearing of it to euery mans vnderstanding, let me shew you, how the consideration of the riches of Gods mercy, should be, and is to all Gods children a motiue to repentance. This shall easily be manifested vnto you, by taking a view of the course and order of repentance. The first thing in repentance, or (if you will) the first degree to it, is a kind of inward perplexity, a mans thoughts being exercised and much busied about this point, what

g Rom.2.4.

h 2.Pet.3.9.

How the mercie of God is motiue to repentance.

shall

ſhall become of his ſoule hereafter. It is the thing ſhadowed out in the parable of the prodigall ſonne: It appeareth in the text, that after he had run an ill courſe a long time, to the vtter waſting of his patrimony, at laſt, *he came to himſelfe* [i], that is, he came to haue a deeper and more ſerious apprehenſion of his owne folly, and to queſtion with himſelfe, how to better his miſerable eſtate, thinking (no doubt) himſelfe vtterly vndone, if he ſhould ſtill be left to this wretched condition. This I ſay, is the firſt degree to repentance, and that which ſets an edge vpon all other holy duties of conuerſion; euen a kind of feare of a mans owne ſelfe, making him to caſt many periſs, and to be iealous of his owne eſtate. Now though the thundring out of the threatnings and terror of the law, be a notable meanes to awake a ſecure heart, yet nothing will ſo much affect a mans mind, and euen melt his ſoule, as the due knowledge and earneſt conſideration of the vnſpeakable riches of Gods *Mercie*. For the more a man thinks with himſelfe of the goodnes of God, of his infinite bounty and vnſearchable loue, the greater will be his feare (eſpecially now at his firſt comming to haue any feeling) leaſt he ſhould miſſe it and be depriued of it. And indeed this is one of the maine differences betwixt the righteous and the wicked, namely, that the wicked and reprobate doe ſome times feare the iuſtice of God, and tremble at the conceipt of tormens, but the *mercie* of God affects them not, vnleſſe it be that they take heart thereby to be the more ſinfull. But the ſeruants of God doe euen quake with the meditation of Gods gentlenes, & of that goodnes which the Scripture reporteth to be in him, namely, leaſt they ſhould come ſhort of his grace, and ſhut themſelues from the comfortable enioying of his loue. *There is mercie with thee, O Lord, that thou mighteſt be feared* [k]. A bleſſed feare which is the daughter of ſo worthy a mother as is *Gods mercie*. The ſecond degree of true repentance which is

[i] Luk. 15. 17.

[k] Pſal. 130. 4.

begotten by the *mercie* of God, is a deepe and vnfained sorrow of heart for sinne; when a man is touched euen at the very heart to thinke that he doth stand guilty of so many grieuous sinnes before God. Now there is nothing so effectuall to beget this sorrow as the consideration of Gods *mercie*: Which that you may the better vnderstand, I must let you know, that the Scripture mentioneth a double sorrow for sin: 1. a *worldly sorrow*, 2. a *godly sorrow* [l]. A worldly sorrow, is a griefe for sinne, arising from the apprehension of Gods wrath, and of the miseries and torments like to follow thereupon. Thus *Esau* sorrowed, so did *Ahab*, so did Iudas, he would haue giuen a world, (if he had beene able) that the fact of betraying Christ had bene vncommitted. A godly sorrow, which (as the Apostle saith) *causeth repentance vnto saluation, not to be repented of,*) is a griefe for sinne, because it is sinne, that is, because it is a thing displeasing vnto God. And this is the true sorrow: the true begetter and breeder whereof is the *mercie* of God. For when a man recounts with himselfe, how gracious a God the Lord is, how rich in mercie, how abundant in *goodnes* and *truth*, and shall remember also how many kindnesses he himselfe hath receiued from him, it cannot but wound his heart to consider, that he should so vnthankfully, so wretchedly, and so vnduetifully demeane himselfe towards him, of whose rich loue, he hath had that plentifull experience. This was that which stroke Dauid so much, and vexed his very soule to consider; *Against thee, against thee haue I sinned* [m]. There were many circumstances, in this sinne of his, which both might, and (no doubt) did iustly grieue him, but that which went neerest his heart was this, euen that God hauing beene so bountifull towards him, he notwithstanding had answered his loue, with so great a dishonour to his name. And the same is also intended in the example of the wastfull youth (the patterne of a true penitent:) you shall see how he doth

[l] 2. Cor. 7. 10.

[m] Psal. 51. 4.

insist

insist and dwell vpon that name (*Father,*) *I will rise and go to my Father, and will say vnto him, Father, &c.*[n]. Out of all questiō, it much encreased his sorrow, to remēber what a kind *Father* he had had, and what an vngracious son he had bene to so good a *Father*. Hence it is, that it is so ordinary a thing in the Scripture, when the Lord would aggrauate mens sinnes, and discouer the haynousnes of them, to make a rehearsall of his kindnesses, to the end that they might learn to be ashamed of thēselues, that they had walked stubbornely against him, who had opened euen the treasures of his mercies vnto thē. Thus hitherto you see, how the *Mercie* of God is a motiue to Repentance. The third thing in repentance, is, (after this *Godly sorrow* for sinne) an earnest suite for the pardon of sinne. Now in this, it is apparent to euery mans vnderstanding, that there can be no such matter of encouragement to a mans soule, or that can giue him such boldnes, to powre out his heart vnto God, as the consideration of his *mercie*. *Let the wicked* (saith the Prophet) *returne vnto the Lord, And why? for he will haue mercie vpon him, and to our God, for he is very readie to forgiue* [o]. *Come* (say the repenting people in *Hosea*) *let vs returne vnto the Lord:* what is their reason? *He hath spoiled, and he will heale vs; he hath wounded vs, and he will bind vs vp* [p]. Dauid speaking of the *mercie* of God in pardoning his great sinne, sheweth the vse which the godly when they heard it, would make of it, *Therefore shall euery one that is godly make his praier to thee, in a time when thou maist be found* [q]. The *Mercie* which Dauid receiued, would encourage others to haue recourse in their necessities vnto God. The last thing in repentance, which is (as it were) the life of it, and the trial and token of the truth of it, is *newnes* of life. The quicknes whereof is the feeling of Gods *mercie*, & the apprehension of his loue. Whē Iosephs mistresse tempted him to vncleanes, he made her this answer: *Behold, my master knoweth not what he hath in the house with me, but hath committed all*

[n] Luk. 15. 18.

[o] Isa. 55. 7.

[p] Hos. 6. 1.

[q] Psal. 32. 6.

that

that he hath to my hand: there is no man greater in this house then I, neither hath he kept any thing from me, but onely thee, because thou art his wife, how then can I doe this great wickednes? As if he had said, *By my masters fauour, beeing at first a bond-man, I am now the greatest in his house, there is nothing wherewith he not freely and fully entrusted me: with what face then should I doe such a wrong, and commit so great a villany against so bountiful a master?* Thus he made his aduancement by his master, and the respective vsage he had receiued from him, as a bulwarke to keepe off the siege of his mistresses incontinencie. Euen so the children of God are wont to reason from the loue of God: *Thus and thus hath God dealt with me, he hath not onely created me, but when I was lost, by the blood of his Sonne he hath redeemed me, by his word he called me, by his spirit he renued me, by his grace he hath hitherto, and doth still vpheld me: what a shame then were it for me, and how should I answer it, if I should aduisedly and presumingly offend him, and willingly continue in the open, apparent, and knowne breach of his will?* What more forcible argument can there be to a godly life, then that which S. Paule vseth, *I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God*[t], *&c.* and in another place: *seeing then we haue these promises, let vs cleanse our selues from all filthinesse of the flesh*[t], *&c.* Marke how he grounds his exhortation to a holy life, vpon the *mercies* of God. And to the Hebrewes, *Seeing we receiue a kingdome which cannot be shaken, let vs haue grace whereby we may so serue God, that we may please him with reuerence and feare*[u]. Sith God is so mercifull to giue vs a kingdome, we should be so dutifull as to serue him in feare. It is necessarie, that our flesh, our corruption should be whipped forward with the scourge of the law, and should be kept in compasse *with the terrour of the Lord*[x]: but the obedience which doth not proceed from a hart possessed with the feeling of Gods loue, and respecting more the obedience

[t] Rom. 12. 1.

[t] 2. Cor. 7. 1.

[u] Heb. 12. 28.

[x] 2. Cor. 5. 11.

dience, in selfe, then any thing else whatsoeuer, that
saith is no true obedience, it is but a seruile and vn-
forced conformitie, God esteemes it not. Thus I haue
made it plaine how the Scripture not without cause,
doth ground the exhortation to repentance, vpon the
doctrine of Gods *mercie*. The consideration of Gods
mercie, breedes feare, which is (as it were) the har-bin-
ger to repentance, it begets hearty sorow for sinne, it
brings foorth boldnesse to come before God to in-
treat his fauour, it stirres vp a desire to giue our selues
vnto him, who hath bestowed so great things vpon
vs, so that I may truly say, (as I did) that the maine
vse of Gods *mercie* is to prouoke men to repentance.

What shall we thinke then of the prophane and
wretched course of the world, in which there is no-
thing more common, then to be drawne by the *mercy*
of God vnto licentiousnesse. The young man will be
loose, the proud man vaine, the drunkard riotous, the
oppressour cruell, the swearer blasphemous, the adul-
terer vitious, each man in his kinde and all, because
*God is mercifull, Christ hath dyed, his blood can wash out
all.* This is the common perswasion. The *mercie* of God
euen the sweetest proprietie of his nature, is made
(with reuerence be it spoken) a Baude to all manner of
vngodlinesse. Men will sinne, *that grace may abound*[x]:
At whatsoeuer time a sinner repents, &c. and the sauing
of the *theefe*, at the last gaspe; these things are in the
mouth of euery Libertine. Thus the deuill hath taught
men to turne the wholesomenesse of the Scripture into
poison, and so make that which by the wisedome of
God was prouided as a preseruatiue against despaire,
to be an encouragement to presumption. If you haue
marked what I haue both said and prooued, it hath ap-
peared plainly, that the *mercie* of God is rather a do-
ctrine of restraint, then of carnall libertie, a motiue
to obedience, rather then a warrant for looseneſſe, a
perswader rather to speed and hasten, then to delay re-

The vrging of this vse.

[x] Rom. 6. 1.

penitence. Is God mercifull? do thou feare then, least thou be deprived of his mercie: *Blessed is the man that so feareth.* Is he kinde? be thou ashamed of thy selfe that hast abused his loue. Is he readie to forgiue? sue to him while thou hast time, and entertaine his grace, *whiles it is called to day.* Is he rich in bounty? the more liberall he is to thee, striue thou to be so much the more obedient vnto him. This is the doctrine of the Scripture, this is the Lords owne counsell: whatsoeuer other inference differing from this, thou makest out of the doctrine of Gods *mercie*, thou shalt be but as one of those, whom S. *Peter* speakes of, *who peruert the Scriptures to their owne destruction.* If thou wilt not credit me, heare what God himselfe hath said, *These things thou hast done, and I held my tongue, therefore thou thoughtest that I was like thee, but I will reproue thee, &c.* and what the Apostle by the teaching of his spirit hath left vpon record, touching all those which are not led by the Lords bountifulnesse to repentance; they *do heape vnto themselues wrath, against the day of wrath.* The *mercie* of God, if it be rightly applied, there is nothing more comfortable; if it be abused, as an occasion to the flesh, there is nothing more damnable. Therefore if at any time, when either thy conscience checketh thee, or the word of God reproueth thee, thou hast by and by a secret conceipt, that thou maiest be bold a little longer, in asmuch as God is gracious, and it is neuer too late to repent: know, that this is the diuels doctrine, it was forged in hell, and not framed in the shop of the Scripture: and therefore pray with *Dauid, Keepe thy seruant from presumptuous sinnes.* This is the maine and principall vse of this doctrine.

y Pro.28.14.

z Heb.3.13.

a 2. Pet.3.16.

b Ps.50.21.

c Rom.2.5.

d Psal.19.13.

A second vse of this doctrine of Gods mercie.

Now there is some further vse to be made of this description of Gods *mercie*, by way of exhorting vs to the *imitation of it*, both because we are in generall commanded to be *followers of God as deare children*, and in particular also are willed, to be *mercifull as our*

e Eph.5.1.

heauenly

onely Father is merciful: There are three things therefore in this description of the mercie of God, wherein we must indeuour to imitate Gods 1. Compassion: 2. Slowneſſe to anger: 3. Readineſſe to forgiue. f Luk.6.36.

How we must imitate God in compaſſion.

Touching Compaſſion, this the Scripture teacheth, that we are bound by the law of chriſtianitie to indeuour the ſuccouring and releefe of others of Gods children as carefully, and with as much tenderneſſe of affection, as if their miſeries were our owne. *Remember them that are in bonds, as though you were bound with them*: g Heb.13.3.

This we are bound to, by that *Communion of Saints*, which in our Creed we profeſſe to beleeue. This communion, as it ſtands in the imparting each to other the good graces of God which we haue receiued, ſo it requireth alſo a fellowſhip, and (as it were) a kind of ſharing in temporall things. I meane not a communion as Anabaptiſts doe, which barreth all proprietie, but ſuch as was in the Primitiue Church, of the members whereof it is ſaid, that they *had all things common* h, that is, in reſpect of vſe, euery man tending the common wants of others, as if they had beene his owne proper occaſions. An excellent example whereof we haue in that care among the Diſciples of Antiochia; who vnderſtanding by the prophecie of *Agabus*, of an approching dearth, *purpoſed euery man according to his abilitie, to ſend ſuccour to the brethren which dwelt in Iudea* i. h Act. 2.44.

i Act.11.28.29.

And how this is vrged vpon all, it is worth the reading and conſidering, in that ſimilitude of the Apoſtle fetched from the bodies: *If one member ſuffer all ſuffer with it*: now, ſaith he, *ye are the bodie of Chriſt, and members euery one for your part* k. k 1.Cor.12.26.27.

This condemneth the generall want of this fellow-feeling which is in this iron age, as it is euen now, as of old, we can be content our ſelues to take our eaſe, *but no man is ſorrie for the affliction of Ioſeph* l. Few men haue that tender-heartedneſſe, to account themſelues, (as it were) parties in the calamities of other Chriſtians, l Am. 6.6.

and to be as willing to further their reliefe, as if it were their owne ease. Well we may speake of the Communion of Saints, and of our good beleefe, but so long as wee want these bowels of affection, to make it our care, by comfort, by counsell, by contribution (if we be able) or (at the least) by prayer, to be helpfull to the afflictions of others, linked to vs by the bond of one and the same profession, our shewes of religion are but vaine. If we be not like *Philemon* of whom the Apostle gaues this testimonie, that *the hearts of the Saints were comforted by him*[m], our profession is but vanitie[n], our faith is but (as S. *Iames* saith) *dead faith*, of no estimation, of no account with the Lord.

How we must follow God in slownes to anger.

The next dutie of meeke, wherein we must striue to be like God, is *slownes to anger*; that is, a labouring to temper the heate of our passions, and to keepe our affections in that good compasse, that they may not easily and suddenly be prouoked. The Scripture speaketh excellently of this point. *Be not thou of an hastie spirit to be angrie, anger resteth in the bosome of fooles*[o]. *He that is slow to wrath is of great wisedome, but he that is of an hastie mind exalteth folly*[p]. *A foole in a day is knowne by his anger*[q]. *The discretion of a man differeth his anger, and his glorie is to passe by an offence*[r]. Our Sauiour maketh *vnadvised anger* a degree of murther, and such an one (saith he) *shall be subiect of iudgement*[s]. Among the *workes of the flesh, wise doers whereof shall not inherite the kingdome of God*, Paul numbreth *wrath*[t]. Thus is the verdict of the Scripture in this matter.

Vse. Let those men looke vnto it, that are of a fierce and eager disposition, and are straight heated vpon every occasion. *Proud, haughtie, and scornefull is his name, that worketh in his arrogancie wrath*[u], who in his furious passions doth, he knoweth not what[x]: such an one (saith *Salomon*) which hath lost the master-dome of his affection, *is like a city broken downe and without wals*[y], hee is subiect to many inconueniences. Those which find

[m] Phile. ver. 7
[n] Iam. 2. 26.
[o] Eccl. 7. 11.
[p] Pr. 14. 29.
[q] Pro. 12. 16.
[r] 1. Pro. 19. 11.
[s] Mat. 5. 22.
[t] Gal. 5. 20, 21.
[u] Prou. 21. 24.
[x] Pro. 5. 8.
[y] Pro. 25. 28.

this

this imperfection in themselues, let them behold this patterne. It is an honour vnto God to be *slow to anger*, and *Learne of me* (saith Christ) *that I am meeke*. Remember his aduise that said, *Giue not thine heart also to all the words that men speake*: he that doth so shall be sure to ouerthrow his owne quietnes.

x Math. 11. 29.

y Eccl. 7. 23.

The third branch of Mercie, wherein we are to imitate God, is Readines to forgiue. This is plaine in the Scripture; *Forgiuing one another, euen as God for Christs sake forgaue you*. *Forgiuing one another, if any man haue a quarrell to another, euen as Christ forgaue you, euen so doe you*. And our Sauiour expounding that petition of the Lords prayer, *Forgiue vs our trespasses, &c.* deliuereth out of it this expresse point: *If you forgiue men their trespasses, your heauenly Father will also forgiue you, but if you doe not forgiue, &c. no more will your heauenly father forgiue you*. And after speaking of this point by a parable of a seruant to whom his master had forgiuen much, but the same by and by was readie to plucke out his fellowes throte for a small summe, *His Master* (saith he) *was wroth, &c.* and thus he concludes, *so likewise shall my heauenly father doe to you, except ye forgiue from your hearts, euery one to his brother their trespasses*.

How we must imitate his readines to forgiue.

z Eph. 4. 23.

a Col. 3. 13.

b Mat. 6. 14. 15.

c Mat. 18. 34. 35.

There can be no surer pledge to a mans soule that his owne sins are forgiuen with God, then that readines which he finds in himself to remit priuate wrongs. That heate which a man feeleth in a warme sunnie day, to be cast vpon him from a stone wall vnder which he walkes, he knoweth it to be a beating back of the heate issuing against the wall from the sunne: and so that yeelding, & that relenting which is in one Christiā toward an other, is but a beame of that grace & mercie which he himselfe hath receiued from the Lord. God may well propound vnto vs his owne example: for it is vnpossible for one man to doe that wrong to another, which we haue all done to God: What shall we thinke then of our selues, if he remitting a world of

sinnes to vs, we shall not find our selues content to let goe some petie trespasses.

Vse. This is an admonition which concernes all. For it is vnpossible to liue here in the world, without some cause of offence. If a man shall greedily apprehend euery occasion, there will be no end. There is no doubt but a man may in a Christian manner seeke a remedie against wrongs: for otherwise to what end is ciuill gouernement? The magistrate *beareth not the sword for naught* [d], and some men are of that vnbridled nature, that if they be not by an ordinarie course repressed, they will breake out into greater extremities. But herein men must looke to three things. First, to beware of a heart desirous of reuenge. To take vengeance is Gods office, and we may not encroch vpon it. Secondly, to be very aduised that our courses be not scandalous to the Church of God. *Offences shall come, but woe be to the man by whom the offence commeth* [e]. Thirdly, to vse extremitie of law as a last refuge. It was the Corinthians fault, that they were by and by at the law one with another, when as among themselues matters might haue beene otherwise determined [f]. Euer remember that of Salomon, *It is a mans honour to cease from strife* [g]. A man cannot doe himselfe a greater credit, in the eies and opinion of those that feare God, then to let goe displeasure.

d Rom 13 4.

e Math. 18. 7.

f Read 1. Cor. 6.

g Pro. 20. 3.

The end of the third Sermon.

The fourth Sermon.

And not making the wicked Innocent, visiting the Iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, and vpon childrens children, vnto the third and fourth generation.

THE fourth and laſt thing by which God is in this place deſcribed, is his Iuſtice: This iuſtice of God is here ſet out by two things. 1. By ſhewing vengeance vpon the perſons of the wicked: 2. By puniſhing their poſteritie to many generations.

Touching the former, (*not making the wicked Innocent*) the words in the Originall are very ſignificant, on this wiſe: *By acquiting he will not acquite the wicked.* It is a manner of ſpeaking peculiar to that language vſed to note out vnto vs the ſurenes and certentie of a thing: as when God told Adam, that if he did eate of the tree in the midſt of the garden, *by dying he ſhould die*, that is, the ſentence of death ſhould ſurely ouertake him, and he ſhould not be able to eſcape; ſo here, when God ſaith of himſelfe, that he is one who *acquiting will not acquite the wicked*, his meaning is, that whatſoeuer may be ſuppoſed becauſe of his patience, yet he will not fully and finally diſcharge thoſe who goe on ſtill in their vngodly courſes, and preſume vpon his *Mercie*, without repentance. The point taught vs hence, is, that howbeit the Lord may in regard of his forbearance, be thought to acquite and paſſe by euen moſt vilanous wicked perſons, yet there is nothing of more certentie, than the ſeueritie of his iuſtice, vpon thoſe

Gen. 2. 17.

Doct.

which

which are not drawne by the abundance and riches of his *mercie* to repent. In the Scripture God is called a *Iudge* [b], yea and *a righteous Iudge* [c]. This title giuen him must needs imply thus much, that he will in time take vengeance vpon impenitent sinners, inasmuch as it cannot stand with the honour of him who takes vnto him the name of an vpright Iudge, to suffer such to escape vnpunished, who breake the bonds of all good lawes, and doe harden their faces to all kind of vngodlines. Salomon saith, that *he which iustifieth the wicked, and he which condemneth the iust, euen they both are an abomination to the Lord* [d]: And againe *He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse* [e]: & by *Isay* there is a woe denounced to those *which iustifie the wicked for a reward* [f]. Now, if the Lord doe hate it in others to acquite those, who are by the strictnes & seuerity of good lawes to be suppressed, we may well be sure, that he himselfe will be much more strait, according as his eie is sharper to see into the nature of euery trespasse, and his hand heauier to punish and auenge the same accordingly. That God *hates all them that worke iniquity* [g], that he is a *iealous God* [h], that he *taketh no reward* [i], that he *accepteth not the persons, no not of princes* [k], that there is *no vnrighteousnesse with him* [l], these and the like are common and ordinary speeches in the Scripture, which could not be true, if the Lord should suffer the abusers of his mercie, the contemners of his grace, the men which make a game of sinne, and set naught by his iudgements, to scape away vnpunished. He suffered the old world long, but at last he gaue euidence of his iustice: He forbare Sodome and Gomorrhe many yeares, but in the end his iudgement vpon them was very terrible. *Ahab* and *Iezebel* flourished, and enioyed the glory of a kingdome for a while, but when the time appointed came, God by his visitation made them a spectacle vnto men. The citie of Ierusalem was as it were the Queene of the world, and the

b Psal.50.6.
c 2.Tim.4.8.
d Prou.17.15.
e Prou.24.24.
f Isa.5.23.
g Psal.5.5.
h Exod.20.5.
i Deu.10.17.
k Iob.34.19.
l Rom.9.14.

state

state and pompe thereof continued long, yea although they *killed the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent vnto them* [m], yea and at last *killed the Lord of life* [n]; yet (as Salomon saith) there was an *end* [o], the Lord arose to iudgement, and of that glorious citie, sometime the mirror of the earth, there is not now left *a stone vpon a stone, which is not cast downe* [p]. There was neuer any age from the first beginning of times, in which God hath not giuen testimonie, as well of his Iustice to punish, as of his mercie to forbeare. He *spared not the Angels* [q], *which kept not their first estate* [r], he doth often cause *iudgement to begin at his owne house* [s], and among his owne chosen people, and (besides that which is left written in the booke of God for our teaching,) we doe many times heare of strange visitations, sometimes by plague, or famine, or tempest, or fire vpon whole cities or townes, sometimes by fearefull ends which some noted euill persons haue comen vnto, and all to teach vs to draw out this conclusion, that *though a sinner doe euill an hundred times, and God prolong his dayes, yet it shall not be well with the wicked, because he feareth not before God* [t]; his *end* shall be, to be cut of at the last [u]. This may serue for the prooving, or rather opening of this point, that God although he forbeare long, yet he will not finally discharge or acquite those which go on in sinne without repentance. Let vs now come to the vse.

[m] Math.23.37.
[n] Act.3.15.
[o] Prou.23.17.
[p] Math.24.2.
[q] 2.Pet.2.4.
[r] Iud.6.
[s] 1.Pet.4.17.
[t] Eccl.8.12.13.
[u] Psal.37.38.

It serueth first to be an assurance vnto vs of a day of iudgement, in which *we must all appeare before the iudgement seat of Christ* [*]. This point is thus collected out of this place. It is said here that the Lord will not discharge the impenitent, but will certenly recompense them their sinne into their bosome. Now we doe not see this ordinarily fulfilled; for generally they *are all in wealth that rebellionsly transgresse* [x], *waters of a full cup are wrung out vnto them* [y], *their houses are peaceable, without feare, and the rod of God is not vpon them* [z], they liue (in

The vse.

[*] 2.Cor.5.10.
[x] Ierem.12.1.
[y] Psal.73.10.
[z] Iob.21.9.

(in shew) contentedly, and die (to the outward appearance) quietly, and we our selues see many a prophane contemner of religion, many a swearer, or vicious person, or oppressor, many a tyrant of the world, liue in health and credit, and in a kind of outward iollity, visited in body and goods, no otherwise but as other men be, nay many times to escape that which other men feele the smart of. Therefore it must needes be, that there is some time yet to come, in which we shall behold the certenty of that, which now may be thought to be more doubtfull, and in which we shall all haue iust cause to say, *Verily there is fruit for the righteous, doubtlesse there is a God that iudgeth in the earth* [a]. Hereupon is that day called *the day of the declaration of the iust iudgement of God* [b], because then the Iustice of God shall be openly discouered, and euidence thereof shall be giuen in the sight of the whole world, whereas before, those men might seeme most happie, which had least religion, and those in the worst case, who made most conscience. If then at any time, considering the course of the world, how they flourish and lift vp their heads, who liue lewdly, and prophanely, and vnchastly, without any feare of Gods majesty, and how they are hated, and despised, and afflicted, who are zealous on Gods behalfe; if (I say) seeing this, thou begin to doubt whether there be any truth in that which thou hast often heard touching the day of Iudgement and account, remember with thy selfe that it cannot be, that God should be a fauourer of iniquity, it cannot stand with his honour to acquite the wicked, and therfore be sure that there is a time at hand, in which his iustice shall appeare, a day at which the vngodly shall well vnderstand how much they deceiued themselues, in thinking the Lord to be a patrone of their naughtines. This is one vse: And to the end you may see it to be the true and naturall vse of this doctrine, you may find it to be applyed by Paul, speaking to the Thessalonians of their great persecution for the Gospels sake,

a Psal. 58. 11.

b Rom. 2. 5.

and

and of the inſolencie of their aduerſaries, he telleth them that this is a *token of the righteous iudgment of God*. 2. Theſſ. 1. 5. 8. So that whereas the world doth reaſon thence, that ſurely *there is no God* in heauen to take vengeance, the Apoſtle teacheth them to reſolue vpon it, euen becauſe of this confuſion that was amongſt men, that therefore the Lord would come at laſt *in flaming fire rendring vengeance* on his enemies, and righting their cauſe which haue felt the waite of oppreſſion for his truth. This is the firſt vſe of this doctrine: In a word, thus: God will not finally acquite the *wicked*; yet it may ſeeme now by the common courſe of the world, that he doth acquite them: therefore (no doubt) there is a time ſet, which will come, for the full and euident manifeſtation of his Iuſtice.

The ſecond vſe is to roote out of many mens hearts that vaine conceipt, by which they doe deceiue their owne ſoules, and it is this. They frame vnto themſelues a God all of mercie and lenity, they thinke him to be one who at their pleaſure, and when they will, is eaſily entreated, and in one word, *becauſe ſentence againſt their euill workes is not preſently executed, their hearts are fully ſet in them to doe euill* [d]. It is the common conceipt which men haue, that if God did ſo hate euill (as he is ſaid to doe) ſurely he would not ſo long forbeare to make it manifeſt. I ſhould not thus enioy health, and riches, and credit, and the things which my heart deſireth (ſaith the godleſs man to himſelfe) if the Lord did ſo abhorre my courſes, as they ſay: Is not he the diſpoſer of all things, doe not all things come to paſſe according to his prouidence, doth not he giue riches, and wealth, and honour as he pleaſeth, and are not theſe the rewards for thoſe whom he loueth? wherefore (ſaith the Atheiſt, and the man who walketh after his owne luſts) they ſhal al ſay what they will, I will neuer beleeue that God is ſo ſtraite and ſo ſeuere, as it is reported: Theſe things would not be thus, if that were true: Therefore

[d] Eccl. 8. 11.

The 2. vſe.

I will yet please my selfe in the waies of mine owne heart, a litle more wantonnesse, a litle more oppression, a litle more excesse cannot be dangerous, no doubt but God will shew me mercie at last, it shall neuer be to late for me to returne. This is the prophane communing of euill men with their owne hearts, harping onely vpon this string, that God is mercifull, and so forget the strictnes and seuerity of his Iustice. But, O thou man, who thus strengthenest thy heart and thy hand vnto vngodlines because of the Lords long suffering, thou must know, (and vnles thou quickly looke vnto it, thou shalt surely feele it,) that as the Lord is *rich in mercie* [e], to all which *breake of their sinnes* [f] by repentance, *and bring forth fruites worthy amendment of life* [g]; so he is terrible in iustice against such as *turne his grace into wantonnes* [h], and beare themselues bold vpon his kindnes, to continue in any loose and dissolute course, choosing rather to liue in the manifest breach of his will, then to abridge themselues of the seeming pleasures of iniquity. Thou that goest on in an euill way, in what kind soeuer, and hauing thy conscience wrought vpon by the power of the word, doest yet gather heart vnto thy selfe out of the mercie of God, supposing that he will tolerate thee, tell me (I pray thee) doest thou beleeue that God spake this with his owne mouth, that he will *not make the wicked innocent*? and if thou thinkest that he spake it, doest thou suppose it to be a truth? and if thou account it true, in what sense doest thou conceiue it, or of what kind of men doest thou take it to be meant? who is he whom the Lord hath (as it were) vowed neuer to discharge? Thinke well of it, what (euer in thy owne iudgement) thou conceiuest to be vnderstood by *wicked* in this place. If thou say, we are all *wicked* by nature, and that it is not the purest, which can liue without a spot: All this is true: But the word (*wicked*) cannot be so taken here; for then we are all shut out, and no hope of sal-

e Eph.2.4.
f Dan.4.24.
g Math.3.8.
h Iud.4.

nation should remaine to any. Besides, they are the wicked in the Lords account, who though they haue many weaknesses, yet striue against their owne corruptions. But, if there be any truth in the Scripture, by *wicked* here is meant such an one, as thou yet art; who liuest in vngodlines, & yet doth make himself beleeue that he shall escape Gods iudgement wel inough; who thinketh he may glut himselfe with the pleasures of sinne, without any final danger to his soule. This is the man, whom the Lord neither wil, nor can absolue. Thou askest me how I proue this, which I haue said? I will alleadge to thee two testimonies of Scripture to make it good. The one is this: *Surely God will wound the head of his enemies, & the hairy pate of him that walketh in his sins*. How canst thou heare this, & beleeue it to be true, & yet dare walk on in thy sins? Thou wilt say this is true, but yet it hath a secret condition of repentance: True: but in the meane space, thou dost not repēt, thou makest thy selfe beleeue, thou wilt; but as yet, thou attēptest it not, neither canst thou tel how long thou shalt enioy the present opportunity. The other place is this. *If there be any mā among you, who whē he heareth the words of the curse, blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall haue peace, though I walk according to the stubbornes of mine owne heart. Thus adding drunkennes to thirst, The Lord will not be merciful vnto him, but the wrath of the Lord & his iealousie shall smoke against that man, and euery curse that is written in this booke shall light vpon him, & the Lord shal put out his name frō vnder heauen*. It is a notable place, it sheweth plainely to whom the Lord will not be mercifull, euen to him, who whē he heareth vengeāce denounced against his sin, perswades himself, it shal be wel inough, this thing shal neuer ouertake him: the God, who *cannot lie*, hath spoken it, he cannot alter the thing which is gone out of his lips, he will not be merciful to that mā, he wil not acquite him at the day of reckoning, his wrath shal smoke against him, & according to the measure of his mercie shewed formerly, shall be the measure of his punishmēt. I pray God giue vs hearts

Psal. 68. 21.

b Deu. 29. 19. 20.

to consider it. It is euen a world of soules, which the deuil beguileth with this rending asunder of the *mercy* & *iustice* of God: To draw men into sin, he sings of nothing but
l Psal. 101. 1. *mercy*: To drowne men in sin, he speakes of nothing but Iustice. It shall be wisedome for vs (like Dauid) to *sing of mercie and iudgement* to: both together will make an excellent temper. To conclude therefore this vse, I will end with the saying of the Apostle: when he had writen earnestly against grosse sinne, *Fornication, Vncleanenesse, Couetousnesse, &c.* many perswaded themselues and others, that God was mercifull, and it should
m Eph. 5. 3. 6. not be so: O (saith Paul) *Let no man deceiue you with vaine words, for, for such things commeth the wrath of God vpon the children of disobedience* m: whatsoeuer men thinke, the word of God cannot faile, they which doe such things can haue *no inheritance in the kingdome of Christ and of God*. It is good to remember, that the Lord *forgiues Iniquitie and sinne*, but he which will truly profit by it, must ioyne this with it, *He will not make the wicked Innocent*: He will be fauourable to those which returne, and he will be terrible to those which are not ledde by his *mercy* to Repentance. Thus much for the first thing by which the *Iustice* of God is noted, namly, vengeance vpon the persons of the *wicked*; now followeth to speake of the wrath of God against their posteritie. *Visiting the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, &c.*

In opening this clause, I will obserue this course, 1. I will shew, how this which is here threatned is made good: 2. I will declare, how it may be said to stand with the iustice of God so to deale. 3. I will teach what vse we must make of it to our selues.

The 2. doct. touching Gods Iustice, Touching the former: God *visiteth the sins of the Fathers vpon their childre* two waies. 1. Spiritually. 2. Bodily. Spiritually, when as he in his secret and vncontrollable iudgement, withholdeth the meanes of grace from the children, giuing them ouer to blindenes and hardnes of heart, so that they become imitators and followers of their fathers sinnes, and tread in the steps of

the ſame vngodlines. Thus hath God giuen an inſtance of his iuſtice in the whole race and generation of mankind, in that we are all *borne in iniquitie* [n], and ſo thorough the force of our naturall corruption, we fall into the like fruites of diſobedience. Thus wee ſee many times how it alſo falleth out, that Idolatrous parents haue idolatrous children, vicious parents, vicious children, and ſo in other ſpecialties. Not that I make it a generall rule which neuer faileth; for we read in Scripture of good fathers, that had wicked ſonnes, and of euill fathers, which were ſucceeded by a righteous iſſue. It is inough for the manifeſting of the iuſtice of God, that it falleth out ſo ſometimes, namely, that God giues teſtimonie of his diſpleaſure againſt the fathers ſinne, by rayſing a ſonne out of his loines, who following him in his vilenes, giueth the Lord occaſion to be avenged vpon him in his poſteritie. Againe, the Lord makes this good by bodily inflictions, when as, finding the poſteritie to perſiſt in the wicked courſes of their Auncestors, he executes ſome open vengeance vpon them, & ſo makes it manifeſt, that howbeit he might ſeeme, by paſſing by their fore-fathers, not to be diſpleaſed with thoſe ſinnes, yet he will finde a time to puniſh: yea and which is more, after this manner of outward viſiting, God doth oftentimes, viſite the ſinnes of an euill father vpon a godly ſonne, as, when a good man left rich in the world, by an oppreſſing and cruell progenitor, falleth into pouertie. Here is an euidence of Gods wrath vpon the violence and couetouſnes of the Father, though the Lord may withall bleſſe it to the ſonne, and vſe it as a meanes of his better humbling, and of drawing him from the world neerer vnto himſelfe. This then is that, which the Lord affirmeth here, that ſuch is the ſeueritie of his wrath againſt obſtinate and preſumptuous going on in ſinne, that his iuſtice is not ſatisfied by the perſonall puniſhments of the offender, but it extends it ſelfe euen to

[n] Pſal. 51. 5.

his

his off-spring and posteritie, sometimes punishing their soules, that they become followers of their fathers sins, ordinarily afflicting them in their outward estate, yea though they themselues be such as feare him; taking such a course, both to manifest his anger against their parents vilenes, and yet withall to weane them from the world neerer vnto heauen.

The next point is, how it may stand with the *Iustice* of God thus to doe, to punish one for the sinne of another, the posteritie for the fathers sake. For the cleering whereof this I say first, that if we had learned in humilitie, to yeeld to this, that the will of God is the Rule of all iustice, we would not make any question, about this matter. This would satisfie vs, that it is so, and that the Lord will haue it so, and therefore it cannot but be iust and equall, inasmuch as from a righteous God can proceed no iniquitie. And if at any time, we felt any conceit in vs presuming to impute any straitnesse or vniustice vnto God, we would soone curbe it with this, *O man, who art thou which pleadest against God* ? Rom. 9. 20.

Secondly, least flesh and blood should yet imagine, that this were to make God no better then a tyrant, one which may satisfie his will against the sonnes of men without iust cause, therefore let vs see whether we doe not giue this libertie vnto men in some cases, to make the children feele the smart of their fathers trespasses. We account it no iniustice, that the sonne of a traytor, though he were in his cradle at the time of his fathers fact, and so was vnable to giue consent vnto it, should for all that be tainted in blood and loose his inheritance: We account such punishmēts deuised with great wisedome, to the end that the affection which nature hath taught all men to beare to the fruit of their loines, may be a meanes to keepe them within compasse. It is an ordinary thing for a father to forfeit his whole estate, to the vtter vndoing of those which shall succeede him. We must beware therefore

that

that we do not tye God straighter, then we tye men: if in mens busineſſes theſe things ſeeme not vniuſt, why ſhould Gods courſe be challenged in puniſhing the fathers euils in the following generations? And leſt this, which I ſay ſhould be deemed only a probability, & no ſufficient plea in this caſe, whoſoeuer ſhall examine the beginning of the 2. chapter of *Heſea*, ſhall ſee good warrant for it. You ſhall vnderſtand it thus: It is ordinarie in the writings and ſermons of the Prophets, for God (to ſhew his loue) to tearme himſelfe the ſpouſe and husband of his people: and for that cauſe their rebellion and falling from God, is ſo often called *fornication*. Now the Lord hauing reiected the Iſraelites, they began to plead with him, as though he had much wronged them to forſake them; for which cauſe God by the Prophet vſeth this ſpeech, *Plead with your mother, plead with her, &c. I will haue no pitie vpon her children, for they be the children of fornications*. By their *mother* Gods vnderſtands the whole bodie of the ſtate, which by an vniuerſall defection had broken faith with the Lord. So that God here reaſoneth with the people, as an husband might do with an adulterous brood, who being brought to ſome diſgrace in the world by their mothers diuorce, begin to challenge their father to haue done them iniurie. In ſuch a caſe the father might iuſtly ſay, *Blame not me, but lay the fault where it is, vpon the lightneſſe and vnchaſtitie of your mother*: ſo God reiecting the people, when they began to expoſtulate with him in the matter, he bids them *pleade with their mother*: the whole bodie of the ſtate, (of which they were as the children) had plaid falſe with him, and he had iuſt cauſe to reiect them. So that the ſumme of all is this, that looke as a husband may iuſtly put away an vnchaſt wife, and with her, her adulterous brood; ſo the Lord may alſo plague and forſake both wicked parents, and the wicked children of ſuch parents. Thirdly, to make the matter yet more plaine,

[illegible] Hoſ. 2. 3. 4.

for the clearing of Gods iustice, this is certaine, that there is no man punished for the sinne of his auncestours, but euen in his person there is found sufficient cause of punishment: so that if he looke well into himselfe, he shall see he hath no iust cause to plead against God; inasmuch as the conscience of his owne deserts will stop his mouth, and leaue him without colour of excuse. We shall reade in one of the Prophets, that when God laid his hand vpon the people, and withall, their fathers transgressions were often obiected to them, they (thinking themselues innocent) vsed this as a common by-word, *The fathers haue eaten sowre grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge*[q]. God sharply reprooueth them for this blasphemie, inasmuch as they thought, that they were punished vndeseruedly. *As I liue, saith the Lord God, ye shall vse this prouerbe no more in Israel*[r]: for you shall see, that your treading in your fathers sinnes, is the thing that hath made you feele the smart of their transgressions. That sonne, who seeth his fathers sinnes and doth them, *he shall die the death, and his blood shall be vpon him*[s]. *But that sonne that seeth all his fathers sinnes, which he hath done, and feareth, neither doth such like, he shall not die in the iniquitie of his father, but he shall surely liue*[t]. So that there is no manner of iniustice in Gods course: for if God do punish my fathers sinne in me, either I shall find the same euill in my selfe, or else some other, euery way equall thereunto. Thus I haue laboured to shew, how it may stand without any preiudice to the *iustice* of God, to visit the sinne of the fathers *vpon the children vnto many generations*. 1. Gods will is the rule of equity, so that if we could see no more, yet that should content vs: 2. We thinke it no straitnesse in men, to let the posteritie feele the smart of their parents folly: why should we limit God rather then men? 3. Though God remoueth the memorie of the fathers fault in auenging the posteritie, yet he neuer punisheth the posteritie without

q Ezec. 18. 2.

r Vers. 3.

s Vers. 10. 13.

t Vers. 14. 17.

without their personall deseruings. Now that we haue seene the manner how this is made good, and that it is no breach of *Iustice* on Gods part, let vs make vse of it to our selues.

First of all it serueth to shew, that euill and irreligious parents are the most deadly enemies to their owne children, inasmuch as they through their sinnes, make them lyable to Gods vengeance. Looke vpon the example of *Ahab*, he shed the innocent blood of *Naboth*, he committed idolatrie and serued *Baalim*: no man could haue brought more euill vpon his posterity, then he himselfe did: for hence it was, that the kingdome was taken from his house, his children had their heads cut off, and all his race fared the worse for his sake. *Sauls* sons bare the punishment of their father, because of his cruelty against the Gibeonites[a]. K. *Ieroboam* that famous Idolater, intended the inuailing of the kingdom to his own line, yet the very course which he plotted to that end, was a canker which did euen fret out his generation: for because he made Israel to sinne, the Lord *swept away the remnant of his house, as a man sweepeth away dung till all be gone*[*]. It is a warning then to all parents, & to those which are to others in the stead of parents, if they do not so much respect themselues, yet at the least for their childrens sake, to beware of hardned and presumptuous sinning against God. The respect which nature hath planted in all, to their posteritie, is such and so great, that we see many do not onely moile and toyle, and pinch, and labour hard to do their children good, but (which is more) do euen aduenture and hazard their soules for their sakes, raking and wringing against equitie for the aduancement of those which shall succeed them. If this naturall loue work so farre, that many do euen aduenture their soules to benefite (as they suppose) their posteritie: how much more should it worke to draw men to such a course of holinesse and of conscience, by which together with

The first vse.

[a] 2. Sam. 21.

[*] 1. King. 14. 10.

bringing a blessing upon their children, they shall profite themselues, and further their own eternall saluation. Now as this reason may be thus generally applyed, so ought it to be of force to beget in vs a detestation of three grosse sinnes especially, which are noted in Scripture, as meanes to bring the curse of God vpon a mans children. The first is idolatrie, that is, the worshipping of God falsely, and after another fashion then he hath prescribed in his Word. Therfore we find it annexed to the second Commandement, the scope whereof is to draw men to the same worship of God, and to banish all humane deuises out of Gods seruice; I say, to this Commandement it is particularly adioyned, that this kind of sinne, God will *visite vpon the* x Exod. 20. 5. *children, vpon the third generation, and vpon the fourth*x. And (as I haue shewed) *Ieroboams* idolatrie, was the very ouerthrow of *Ieroboams* of-spring. Is it then much vs the rather to obserue this, because, howsoeuer we are not guiltie of that grosse idolatrie, which stands in the worship of stockes and stones, and of the worke of mens hands, yet that which is almost as bad, is our common fault, namely, the seruing of God as our selues please. The greatest part of vs care not to know and enquire, how Gods will is to be serued, but what others before vs haue performed: this is the chiefe thing we looke vnto. And so we make God an Idoll, supposing him to be one which will be pleased with that which best pleaseth vs, and so that which we do, becommeth euen Idolatrie, for it is a worship which hath not (for ought we know) any ground or foundation vpon Gods word. This sinne, God hath punished in others, and he will punish in vs. Nay I am perswaded, that that deadnes and blindnes of heart, which is in the most, is a iust iudgement of God, vpon our neglect to worship him after his owne prescriptions, yea and our posteritie also shall feele the smart of it, the Lord will punish vs in them, and afflict them for our

sakes.

sakes. The next sinne noted to be punished in a mans posteritie is, oppression, cruell, vniust and vnlawfull gettings. Many men doe bestirre themselues in the world exceedingly, thinking (almost) no course amisse, by which they *may set their nest on high* [y], and make their seed great vpon the earth after them. But in this they are vtterly deceiued, inasmuch as this is the very next way to bring the curse of God vpon their familie. Many times it commeth to passe, that that which a man prouided for his owne heires, neuer falleth to their lot to whom it was intended. And so that is verified which is said, that *the riches of of the sinner is laid vp for the iust* [z]: according as Hamans estate was giuen vnto Mordecai [a]. *Doubtles* (saith Dauid) *a man walketh in a shadow, and disquieteth himselfe in vaine, he heapeth vp riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them* [b]. *Whose shall those things be which thou hast prouided*, said God vnto the Rich man [c]. Well, although the heire of the oppressor come to the owning and fingering of that which he hath prepared, yet (saith Salomon) *he begets a sonne, in whose hand is nothing* [d], one that commeth to beggerie, notwithstanding the wealth of his predecessour. And of this, the world euery day affoards many examples; so true is the old saying; Goods euill gotten scarsly come to the third heires enioying. God hath appointed *the flame out of the wall, and the beame out of the timber* [e], to put him in mind to be auenged. The third sin which is punished in a mans posteritie, is Adulterie: *If my heart* (saith Iob) *hath been deceiued by a woman, or if I haue laid waite at the doore of my neighbour, &c. This is a fire that shall deuoure to destruction, and which shall roote out all mine encrease* [f]; whether we vnderstand by the word (*Encrease*) Iobs off-spring, or his wealth, & so take the place to agree to that of Salomon, that *for a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread* [g], all is one for the matter to which I apply it, namely, to shew that God doth so farre abhorre vnclean nesse, that for it he

[y] Hab. 2. 9.
[z] Pro. 13. 22.
[a] Ester. 8. 1.
[b] Psa. 39. 6.
[c] Luk. 12. 20.
[d] Eccl. 5. 13.
[e] Hab. 2. 11.
[f] Iob. 31. 9. 12.
[g] Pro. 6. 26.

punisheth the very stock and generation of the Adulterer; either he wil cut of his seed, or he will consume that which should maintaine them. Well then this is the summe: Parents, euen for their posterities sake, should make conscience of their waies, and endeauour to walke in all holy obedience vnto God: especially they should beware of three Euils, 1. Idolatrie. 2. Oppression. 3. Adulterie. The seed of parents liuing and dying in these sinnes, seldome scape away without a punishment.

The 2. Vse. A second vse of this doctrine, is to teach vs to cast downe our selues before the Lord, euen for the sinnes of our progenitors. We haue an excellent example for it in Daniel, in that notable praier of his: Among other things this he saith, and thus he speaketh, *O Lord to vs appertaineth open shame, to our Kings, to our Princes, to our Fathers*[h]: and it is not amisse that we are taught to pray the Lord, *not to remember our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers.* I remember Dauid, foretelling by the spirit of prophecie, the wrath of God against Iudas which betrayed Christ, vseth these words, *Let the iniquitie of his fathers be had in remembrance with the Lord, and let not the sinne of his mother be done away*[i]; which sheweth what a heauie thing it is for the posteritie, when the sinnes of their forefathers come vnto remembrance before God. Therefore (I say) we had need to be humbled euen to confider the Idolatrie & blindenes of our fathers, and to feare least the Lord should reuiue his iustice against them, by taking vengeance vpon vs: which is a dutie cõtrarie to the practise of the most, who doe so doate vpon their Auncestors, that they account their courses and actions to be rules for them, and that it is inough for them to be of the same religion that they were: so that because they liued in ignorance of the word of God, and in the worship of dumbe idols, leaning to traditions and superstitious principles, therefore they will be ignorant also,

[h] Dan. 9. 18.

[i] Psa. 109. 14.

and tie themselues to tread in their steps, without better inquirie. It is plaine by my Text, that there may be *Childrens Children*, yea, foure generations successiuely (through the iust iudgement of God) wrapped vp in error; so that to cleaue to our forefathers (without any further question) is a course which may soone deceiue vs; It is a good rule, that we must not looke so much what others haue done before vs, as what Christ hath done who is before all. That which they haue done amisse must humble vs, and not embolden vs to be their followers.

The end of the fourth Sermon.

The fifth Sermon.

The spirituall Tillage,

or

The Husbandrie and Harvest of the Righteous.

Prou. 11. 18.

He that soweth righteousnes shall receiue a sure reward.

THIS sentence is a counter-plea, to that prophane and peremptorie principle of the Atheists of the world, who say, *It is in vaine to serue God* [c]. As the *Dagon* of the Philistims fell downe before the Lords *Arke* [b], so this wretched conceipt cannot stand in the presence of this Scripture: the very sound of it cannot chuse but make it doe as the souldiers did which came to attach our Sauiour, euen

[c] Mal. 3. 14.

[b] 1. Sam. 5. 3.

goe backwards and fall to the ground [c].

[c] Ioh.18.6.

The scope of the place.

The particular scope of the holy Ghost, is, to let vs see the *Husbandrie and the Harvest* of the righteous: *The Husbandrie* in these words, *he that soweth righteousnesse*; *the harvest* in these, *shall receive a sure reward*. I will bound my whole sermon, within the compasse of these points. 1. What it is to *sow righteousnes*: 2. what is the *sure reward*. 3. How true it is that *he which soweth righteousnes shall receive a sure reward*. 4. What matter of doctrine may be raised out of all.

The points to be handled.

1. What it is sow righteousnesse.

To *sow righteousnesse*, is the same which the Apostle calleth, to *sow to the spirit* [d]; If that kind of speaking be doubtfull, it is all one with these, to *mortifie the deedes of the flesh by the spirit* [e], *to walke in the spirit* [f], *to be vpright in ones way* [g], *to have respect to all Gods commandements* [h], *to desire in all things to live honestly* [i], *to cause the conversation to be such as becommeth the Gospell* [k], *to give ones selfe vnto God* [l], *to endeavour alway to have a cleere conscience toward God and toward man* [m]: In a word, *to denie vngodlines and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world* [n], *shining as a light in the midst of a naughtie and crooked nation* [o]. This is to *sow righteousnes*. This gratious course of consecrating a mans selfe vnto God in the practise of godlines, let vs a little enquire why the spirit of God calleth it *a sowing of Righteousnes*. I may say of this as Saint Iames doth in another case, *Doe yee thinke that the Scripture speaketh* thus in vaine [p]? *surely no*: It is because of the likenes which is betwixt the practise of godlines, and the *sowing of the seed*, in some things which goe before sowing: in some things which doe accompanie the act of sowing: in some things which follow after sowing.

[d] Gal.6.8.
[e] Rom. 8. 13.
[f] Gal.5.16.
[g] Psa.119.1.
[h] Ver.6.
[i] Heb.13.18.
[k] Phil.1.29.
[l] Rom.6.13.
[m] Act.24.16.
[n] Tit.2.12.
[o] Phil.2.15.
[p] Iam.4.5.

The proportion which is betwixt the practise of godlines, & the sowing of seed, in respect of the things which doe goe before sowing, standeth thus. Before *sowing* two things are chiefly looked to: 1. the preparation and fitting of the ground: 2. the choise of *seed* to

be

to be put into the ground. Thus much, without any further discourse by me, is knowne sufficiently. In the *sowing* of *Righteousnes*, the like to these two are of as great behoofe. 1. The preparation of the heart: 2. The choice of particulars belonging to a Christian course. Touching the preparation of the heart, the Scripture (following the similitude of Husbandrie) speakes thus, *Breake vp your fallow ground* [q]. It is the same with that which *Ioel* calleth the *Renting of the heart* [r]. The necessitie of it is apparent. There is *a Bundle of folly in euery naturall heart* [s], it is *wicked aboue all things* [t], the whole frame of it is *onely euill euery day* [u], it is *reprobate to euery good worke* [x], it is *stony* [y]. The curse which God for mans sinne laid vpon the Earth, (*thornes, and thistles shall it bring forth* [z]) lieth vpon euery vnconuerted heart, out of it comes nothing but *euill thoughts* [z]: when will any good seed grow in this soyle, if it be not very well manured? To breake vp this flintie and craggie heart, the Lord hath appointed the preaching of the Lawe. That is as *fire* to burne out the weedes, and as a *hammer* [a], to breake the clods in pieces. It will *pricke the heart* [b], *and melt it* [c], it will *make manifest the secrets of it* [d], it will *enter through to the deuiding of the soule and spirit* [e]. It will make him that was sometime as an *vntamed Calfe* [f], and did *spurne with the heele* [g], and did say with *Pharaoh, who is the lord that I should heare his voice* [h], to crie out with meekenes, *Lord what wilt thou that I doe* [i]? *Talke you with vs*, O thou man of God, *and we will heare thee* [k]. Now touching the choice of particular good things to be put in practise, expresse is the charge of the Apostle, *Desire the best gifts* [l]: *Whatsoeuer things are true, whatsoeuer things are honest, whatsoeuer things are iust, whatsoeuer things are pure, &c. if there be any vertue, &c. thinke on these things* [m]: as if he had said, If there be any thing better or more commendable then another, seeke to draw that into your practise. Men who thinke any thing to be

q Ier.4.4. Hos.10.12.
r Ioel.2.13.
s Pro.22.15.
t Ier.17.9.
u Gen.6.5.
x Tit.1.16.
y Ezech.11.19.
z Gen.3.18. Math.15.19.
a Ier.23.29.
b Act.2.37.
c 2.King.22.19.
d 1.Cor.14.25.
e Heb.4.12.
f Ier.31.18.
g Deu.32.15.
h Exod.5.2.
i Act.8.6.
k Exod.20.19.
l 1.Cor.12.31.
m Phil.4.8.

good inough, any maner of ſeruing God, any manner of zeale and holines, and ſo will he aduenture entertaine any courſe commended to them, either by the cuſtome of the times, or by the tradition of their fathers, or by the aduiſe of carnall friends, ſhall neuer be truely religious. I ſearch the market for the beſt ſeed, why ſhall I not ſearch, and learne, and inquire which is the beſt courſe of godlines: *Proue which is the will of God* both *acceptable* and *perfite* to [a]. The ſecond reſemblance, is betwixt the Act of ſowing, and the practiſe of godlines, and that may be laid open in two particulars alſo. 1. The time of ſowing. 2. The plenty in ſowing. Firſt, we haue a ſeuerall ſeaſon for euery graine: when this ſeaſon commeth in courſe, the husbandman falleth to his worke, though (perhaps) it be not ſo ſeaſonable as he could deſire. Men know well inough the truth of that ſaying, *He that obſerueth the wind ſhall not ſow* [b]. Thus is it in the ſpirituall buſines: the ſeed time for righteouſneſſe is this life: the opportunity muſt be taken when it commeth: *While ye haue time* [p], *while ye haue light* [q], *while it is called to day* [r]. Put caſe now, that, in following this opportunitie, I meet with many encombrances, the world frownes, euill tongues are ſharpened againſt me, the deuill rageth, the fleſh rebelleth: ſhall I leaue ſowing, and tary for a calmer ſeaſon? God forbid. Through with it I muſt, *in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon* [s], *through the infirmitie of the fleſh* [t], *in great affliction, and anguiſh of heart with many teares* [u], *by honour and diſhonour* [x]. If I looke for a better time, vpon a ſodeine, there will be no time at all. Secondly, the ſeedes-man caſts not in one ſeed alone, but an hond full at once, one hand full after another. To ſow righteouſnes, is to be *rich in good workes* [z], to be *abundant in the worke of the Lord* [y], to doe good *once and againe* [z], to ioyne with *faith, vertue, with vertue, knowledge, with knowledge, temperance, with temperance, patience, with patience godlines, with godlines, brotherly kindnes, with brotherly kindnes,*

[a] Rom.12.2.
[b] Eccl.11.4.
[p] Gal.6.10.
[q] Ioh.12.35.
[r] Heb.3.13.
[s] 2.Tim.4.2.
[t] Gal.4.13.
[u] 2.Cor.2.4.
[x] 2.Cor.6.8.
[z] 1.Tim.6.18.
[y] 1.Cor.15.58.
[z] Phil.4.16.

ners, Loue [a]. This is right sowing. Some doe now and then drop out a good worke (in shew) some little deuotion to God, some petty office of mercie to men, but it is to no purpose in the world: no plenty in sowing, no fulnes in reaping. The third likenes is in things which follow after sowing. Great is the care that the seed put into the ground may thriue and prosper: the fields be hedged, the cattell be shut out, the birds driuen away, the stones pickt out, it is euer and anone looked vpon to see how it goeth on. In spirituall matters, it is vaine to haue entred into a good course, if it be not continued; *Continue in the Lord* [b], *encrease more* [c] *and more* [c], *grow in grace* [d], *be led forward vnto perfection* [e], *let your workes be more at last then at first* [f]. *Ye did runne well, who letted you* [g]? what can be said to a man more disgracefull? to be like the feast makers, who at *the beginning set forth good wine, and when men haue well drunke, then that which is worse* [h]. He were a mad man, who when he had sowed his ground, would strait turne in his swine to roote it vp, or when it is come to be an hand full high, would let in his beasts to trample it and to deuoure it vp, or when it is ripe, would doe with it as *Samson* did with the corne of the Philistims, vse means to burne it vp [i]. When thou hast taken paines in some degrees of godlines, if thou then giue ouer and leaue all to the spoile, what shall I say to thee but the words of the Apostle, *Art thou so foolish, that when thou hast begun in the spirit, thou wilt end in the flesh* [k]? Continue thy care and prouidence vntill the harueft, else thou shalt neuer reape. Thus at last we see what it is to *sow righteousnesse*, namely, to frame and set ones selfe to the practise of godlines: of this, these be signes and companions. 1. The submitting a mans selfe to haue his heart broken vp by the power of Gods word. 2. A diligent inquirie into the best way of pleasing God. 3. A pressing forward amidst many encombrances. 4. A striuing and caring to be fruitfull in good workes. 5. A

[a] 2. Pet. 1. 5. &c.
[b] Phil. 4. 1.
[c] 1. Thes. 4. 1.
[d] 2. Pet. 3. 18.
[e] Heb. 6. 1.
[f] Reu. 2. 19.
[g] Gal. 5. 7.
[h] Ioh. 2. 10.
[i] Iudg. 15.
[k] Gal. 3. 3.

watching ouer a mans course with a continued diligence, vntill he receiue *the end of his faith, the saluation of his soule* [l].

l 1. Pet. 1. 9.

2. What is the sure reward.

The sure reward annexed to this *sowing*, is either in *the life present*, or in *that that is to come* [m]. The reward in this life, is either outward, or inward. The outward is often mentioned; *Blessed is euery one that feareth the Lord, &c. and when thou eatest the labours of thine hands, thou shalt be blessed, and it shall be well with thee* [n], *Health shall be to thy nauill, and marow to thy bones; thy barnes shall be filled with abundance* [o], *The good man shall giue inheritance vnto childrens children* [p], *The Lyons doe lacke and suffer hunger; but they which seeke the Lord, shall want nothing that is good* [q]. The Scripture is full of the like promises. All which must be vnderstood with this limitation, namely, that these outward things are the reward of the righteous, so farre forth, as the wisedome of God shall see it fitting. For many times it falleth out otherwise, they *lie among the pots* [r], they *find no cittie to dwell in* [s], *their soules are filled with the mocking of the wealthie, and with the despitefulnes of the proud* [t], *the plowers plow vpon their backes* [u]. How then (will some man say) haue they an outward recompense? I answer: when God will abase them, he will teach them *how to be abased* [x]. It is a straunge vertue which God can giue to a title; euen to make it *better to a iust man, then great riches to the mightie wicked* [y]. *How shall I set this before an hundred men* said the prophets seruant; *yet they shall eate, and there shall remaine* (said the Lord) [z]: Daniel shall looke *fairer and in better liking*, hauing nothing but *pulse to eat and water to drinke*, then they which *eate the portion of the Kings meate* [a]: Ionas shall find more contentment vnder his *Beath* [b], then *Ahashuerosh* and *Haman* sitting drinking in the Palace [c]. This is the reward for outward things. The inward reward is peace of conscience arising out of the comfortable assurance of Gods fauour, *Being iustified by faith we haue peace with God* [d].

m 1. Tim. 4. 8.

n Psal. 128. 1. 2.

o Pro. 3. 8. 10.

p Pro. 13. 22.

q Psal. 34. 10.

r Psal. 68. 13.

s Psal. 107. 4.

t Psal. 123. 4.

u Psal. 129. 3.

x Phil. 4. 12.

y Psal. 37. 16.

z 2. King. 4. 43.

a Dan. 1. 15.

b Ion. 4. 5.

c Est. 3. 15.

d Rom. 5. 1.

These

These things doe, and the God of peace shall be with you [a]. This is a rich reward. It is a *continuall feast* [c], It brings a *ioy vnspeakable & glorious* [f], a ioy working euen in afflictions [g], a ioy which may be sometimes ouerclouded with many inward perplexities, but yet such an one as shall *neuer be taken away* [h]. This peace accompanieth the righteous euen to the end of their daies [i]: It breeds a *departure hence in peace* [l]: A departure indeed, not without testimonie of Sathans malice, of mans weakenes, of Gods pleasure to trie his seruants; but yet a departure in which alwaies first or last the peace of conscience gets the victory. The reward in the life to come cannot be expresst; for *the things which eye hath not seene, neither eare hath heard, neither came into mans heart, are which God hath prepared for them that loue him* [k]. As at the point of death, their soules are *loosed* [l] from their bodies, and caried by *Angels into Abrahams bosome* [m], where they *rest from their labours* [n]: so in the last day their bodies be raised out of the dust, *and made like to Christs glorious bodie* [o], & recoupled to their soules, and then they shall *meete the Lord in the ayre, and so be euer with the Lord* [p], where they shall receiue a *most excellent and an eternall waight of glorie* [q]. This is the *sure reward* here spoken of.

[a] 1 Phil.4.9.
[c] Prou.15.15.
[f] 1.Pet.1.8.
[g] Rom.5.3.
[h] Ioh.16.22.
[i] Luk.2.29.
[k] 1.Cor.2.9.
[l] Luk.2.29. Phil.1.23.
[m] Luk.16.22.
[n] Reu.14.13.
[o] Phil.3.21.
[p] 1.Thes.4.17.
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Now touching the certenty of this reward, the Scripture reasoneth two waies: First by a prouerbiall speech, *Whatsoeuer a man soweth that he shall reape* [r]; holines in the seed, happines in the haruest: When the course hath beene gracious, the end must needs be glorious. Secondly, by the truth of Gods promise, and that is this; [s] *Know ye whatsoeuer good thing any man doth, the same shall he receiue of the Lord*: The duties of righteousnes are *ordained* (as the way) *to walke in* [t]. This course cannot be broken: God will *not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips* [u]. This must be noted to stop the mouthes of Papists, who vpon this and the like places seeke to ground their doctrine of merits. Against whom wee must

2. The certenty of the thing preached by Salomon.
[r] Gal.6.7.
[s] Eph.6.8.
[t] Eph.2.10.
[u] Psal.89.34

watching ouer a mans course with a continued dili-
gence, vntill he receiue *the end of his faith, the saluation*
1 1. Pet. 1. 9. *of his soule* 1.

2 What is the sure reward.

The *sure reward* annexed to this *sowing*, is either in *the life present*, or in *that that is to come* m. The reward in
m 1. Tim. 4. 8. this life, is either outward, or inward. The outward is often mentioned; *Blessed is euery one that feareth the Lord, &c. and when thou eatest the labours of thine hands,*
n Psal. 128. 1. 2. *thou shalt be blessed, and it shall be well with thee* n, *Health shall be to thy nauill, and marow to thy bones; thy barnes shall*
o Pro. 3. 8. 10. *be filled with abundance* o, *The good man shall giue inheri-*
p Pro. 13. 22. *tance vnto childrens children* p, *The Lyons doe lacke and*
q Psal. 34. 10. *suffer hunger, but they which seeke the Lord, shall want nothing that is good* q. The Scripture is full of the like promises. All which must be vnderstood with this limitation, namely, that these outward things are the reward of the righteous, so farre forth, as the wisedome of God shall see it fitting. For many times it falleth
r Psal. 68. 13. out otherwise, they *lie among the pots* r, they *find no*
s Psal. 107. 4. *citie to dwell in* s, *their soules are filled with the mocking of*
t Psal. 123. 4. *the wealthie, and with the despitefulnes of the proud* t, *the*
u Psal. 129. 3. *plowers plow vpon their backes* u. How then (will some man say) haue they an outward recompense? I answer: when God will abase them, he will teach them *how to*
x Phil. 4. 12. *be abased* x. It is a straunge vertue which God can giue to a litle; euen to make it *better to a iust man, then great*
y Psal. 37. 16. *riches to the mightie wicked* y. *How shall I set this before an*
z 2. King. 4. 43. *hundred men* said the prophets seruant; yet *they shall eate, and there shall remaine* said the Lord z: Daniel shall looke *fairer and in better liking*, hauing nothing but *pulse to eat and water to drinke*, then they which *eate the portion of*
a Dan. 1. 15. *the Kings meate* a: Ionas shall find more contentment
b Ion. 4. 5. vnder his *Booth* b, then *Ahashuerosh* and *Haman* sitting
c Est. 3. 15. drinking in the Palace c. This is the reward for outward things. The inward reward is peace of conscience arising out of the comfortable assurance of Gods
d Rom. 5. 1. fauour, *Being iustified by faith we haue peace with God* d.

These

These things doe, and the God of peace shall be with you [d]. This is a rich reward. It is a *continuall feast* [e], It brings a *ioy vnspeakable & glorious* [f], a ioy working euen in afflictions [g], a ioy which may be sometimes ouerclouded with many inward perplexities, but yet such an one as shall *neuer be taken away* [h]. This peace accompaneth the righteous euen to the end of their daies [i]: It breeds a *departure hence in peace* [i]: A departure indeed, not without testimonie of Sathans malice, of mans weakenes, of Gods pleasure to trie his seruants; but yet a departure in which alwaies first or last the peace of conscience gets the victory. The reward in the life to come cannot be expreſt; for *the things which eye hath not seene, neither eare hath heard, neither came into mans heart, are which God hath prepared for them that loue him* [k]. As at the point of death, their soules are *loosed* from their bodies, and caried by *Angels into Abrahams bosome* [m], where they *rest from their labours* [n]: so in the last day their bodies be raised out of the dust, *and made like to Christs glorious bodie* [o], & recoupled to their soules, and then they shall *meete the Lord in the ayre, and so be euer with the Lord* [p], where they shall receiue a *most excellent and an eternall waight of glorie* [q]. This is the *sure reward* here spoken of.

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2. The certenty of the thing promised by Solomon.

[r] Gal.6.7.
[s] Eph.6.8.
[t] Eph.2.10.
[u] Psal.89.34

must know. 1. That the scope of the Scripture here is to shew who shall be rewarded: not the cause why the reward is giuen; the way to the kingdome, not the cause of raigning[a]. 2. That the certentie of the reward depends vpon a free promise, not vpon the worth of the thing done. God hath made himselfe a debter, not by owing, but by promising[x]. Yea but (saith the Papist) here is a reward spoken of, and a reward presupposeth merit. I answer, there is a double reward, 1. a reward of fauour, 2. a reward of *debt*[y]. This is a reward of fauour, giuen as a free recompence, not as a thing deserued. To put it out of question, it is called a *reward of inheritance*[z], and where is lesse desert then in the case of inheritance. And thus I haue ended the three first points. Now I come to the fourth: There are three points of doctrine to be collected hence: first, the Labour of religion: secondly, the Triall of religion: thirdly, the Reward of religion. In the first we shall see paines, in the second patience, in the third pleasure. Of these in order.

[a] Bernard. de interpellat. Dau.

[x] August. in Psal. 31.

[y] Rom. 4. 4.

[z] Col. 3. 24.

4. what points of doctrine may be gathered.

1. Doctrine.

The first doctrine is, that the practise of godlinesse is a matter which requireth great industrie. I proone it thus: *It* is a sowing. Whose life is fuller of labour then the husbandmans? It may be truly said of him, that he doth *rise early, and lie downe late, and eate the bread of sorow*[a]: he runneth in a ring, his labour is neuer at an end. Let vs a little consider the labour of religion, S. *Peter* calleth for *all diligence*[b], our Sauiour for *striuing*[c], and for *watching*[d]: *the kingdome of heauen suffereth violence*[e]. *I beate downe my bodie*[f] saith the Apostle, *I follow hard toward the marke*[g], *I opened my mouth and panted*, saith *Dauid*[h]. Marke these places well, and you shall see that a man hath something to do, that will be a good Christian. I appeale to your selues: how many doctrines do you heare, the hearing whereof maketh you to *goe away sorowfull*, like the rich man in the Gospell[i], and to say, as some of Christs hearers did, *This is a hard*

[a] Psal. 127. 2.
[b] 2. Pet. 1. 5.
[c] Luc. 13. 24.
[d] Mat. 24. 42.
[e] Mat. 11. 12.
[f] 1. Cor. 9. 27.
[g] Phil. 3. 13. 14
[h] Psal. 119. 131.
[i] Mar. 10. 22.

hard saying: who can heare it[k]? The Scripture speaketh of *circumcising the heart*[l], of *crucifying the flesh*[m], of *shaking off the sinne that hangeth so fast on*[n]. Are these things of sleight performance? How hard a matter is it to reforme an euill course which a man hath long continued in? It is like the labour of turning an old, forsaken, barren, weedie, vneuen parcell of ground into tillage: somewhat ado there is to bring it into fashion, it will be soone out of order againe, if it be not well looked vnto. He is no right Christian, who thinkes he may haue any spare leisure-time from the practise of Christianitie. *While men slept, came the enemie, and sowed tares*[o]. A little intermission of our holy care, giueth the diuell a great deale of aduantage.

k Ioh.6.60. l Deut. 10.16. m Gal.5.24. n Heb.12.1. o Mat.13.25.

This serueth to discountenance the common conceipt of men, who thinke it, of all other matters one of the most easie, to be a Christian. Men suppose they be religious, though they neuer entertained one serious thought touching religion. O thou vaine man! learne to see thine owne folly: thou hast taken ground into thy hand, and thy purpose is to get by it. I need not now to tell thee of the diligence that is required: thou thy selfe knowest, that either thou must labour, and toyle, and take paines, and obserue all opportunities, or else thou shalt haue but an easie bargaine, and reape the loyterers reward, which is, to *be clothed in ragges*[p]. All this thou doest acknowledge to be most certaine: yet when we come to speake of sowing of righteousnesse, and of the labour that doth accompanie it, thou art readie to say with the disciples, *what needeth this waste*[q]? What need so much adoe, as though without so much hearing, so much meditating, so much praying, so much watching ouer the heart, so much preciseness, so much tying ones selfe to these and these courses, a man might not be saued. Thus men cousen themselues with their owne fancies. I pray you, beguile your soules no longer. As often as you see *sowing*, re-

The vse.

p Pro 23.21.

q Mat.26.8.

remember this place of Scripture, and then consider seriously, that as there is no thriuing by husbandrie, except it be followed with industrie: so there can be no riches of religion, where there is no labour of godlinesse. Spirituall loytering, and spirituall thriuing, neuer yet did meet together in one soule.

The 2. doctr. The second doctrine followeth, and that is this: that the full reward of religion is not to be looked for by and by vpon the practise of religion. This is manifest by the proportion of the place. Sowing and reaping come not at once: the one is in the winter or toward the Spring, the other in Autumne: he which hath sowne to day, doth not looke to reape to morrow. *Behold* (saith the Scripture) *the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruite of the earth, and hath long patience for it, vntill he receiue the former and the latter raine*[r]. In spirituall things it is so: it is the pleasure of God to exercise vs with delaies: to giue vs the *first fruites*[s] onely, and the *earnest of our inheritance*[t] in this life, and to make vs looke long for the fulnesse of happinesse. If any aske, why the Lord so dealeth, seeing the *hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart*[u], I answer, that the Lord so dealeth, first, for the exercise of those spirituall graces which himselfe hath giuen to his seruants. What vse were there of patience, if there were no delaies? But now *ye haue need of patience*[*], saith the Apostle: what vse of hope, if there were present possession? For *hope which is seene is no hope*[x]. There is no proofe of valour in a short encounter: many a coward layeth about him for a bout or two. If a man should sow this weeke, and reape the next, it were nothing to make shift to liue: but he which can make his stocke to reach, and his store to continue for his vse from the seed time to the harueſt, deserues to be commended for a husband. Secondly, God thus dealeth for our better humbling, that in the time of delay we may learne what we deserued if we had bene dealt with in extremitie. It is like

r Iam.5.7.
s Rom.8.23.
t Eph.1.14.
u Pro.13.12.
* Heb.10.36.
x Rom.8.24.

like the course *Dauid* tooke with *Absalon*, he forgaue him at *Ioabs* suite, yet (saith he) *Let him turne to his owne house, and not see my face*[y]. By this he would haue *Absalon* learne to know what it was to haue offended his father. Thus we see Gods course, and the ground of his course.

y 2. Sam. 14. 24

It is necessarie we should know this, lest otherwise we should be *wearied and faint in our minds*[z]. Many a man entring into a religious course, and not finding so much sensible good in it, as he did expect, *turnes aside like a deceitfull bow*[a], *looseth his first loue*[b], and leaues off like the builder in the Gospell[c], as being either not able, or not willing to go forward. It is a notable grace, if a man haue learned to tarrie the Lords leisure. It is noted as a fruit of faith, *He that beleeueth, shall not make haste*[d]. To encourage vs to this, let vs hearken to the next doctrine.

z Heb. 12. 3.
a Psal. 78. 57.
b Reu. 2. 4.
c Luk. 14. 29.
d Isa. 28. 16.

We haue heard hitherto of the *sweat*, now let vs heare the *sweet* of Religion, touching which this is the doctrine. That the Lord will surely reward those, which faithfully labour in his seruice. *Be strong* (saith the Prophet to the people, intending a reformation of religion) *let not your hands be weake; for your worke shall haue a reward*[e]. *Waite thou on the Lord, and he shall exalt thee*[f]; *Verily, there is fruite for the righteous*[g]: *they that sow in teares, shall reape in ioy, they shal bring their sheaues*[h]. *He will fulfill the desires of them that feare him*[i]. *There shall be an end, and thy hope shall not be cut off*[k]. *I said I haue laboured in vaine, &c. but my iudgement is with the Lord, and my worke with my God*[l]. *I know that it shall be well with them that feare the Lord*[m]. Though the time of patience be for a *time*, and then be doubled and become for *times*, yet at last it shall come to *halfe a time*[n]. *The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at last it shall speake, and not lye; though it tarrie, waite, for it shall surely come, and shall not stay*[o]: *Your labour is not in vaine in the Lord*[p]. *In due season we shall reape*[q]. *Behold, I come*

The 3. doctr.
e 2. Chro. 15. 7.
f Psa. 37. 34.
g Psa. 58. 11.
h Psa. 126. 5. 6.
i Psa. 145. 19.
k Pro. 24. 14.
l Isa. 49. 4.
m Ecc. 8. 12.
n Dan. 7. 25.
o Hab. 2. 3.
p 1. Cor. 15. 58.
q Gal. 6. 9.

r Reu.22.12. *shortly, and my reward is with me* r: what can be more apparant?

The Vse. This must prouoke and encourage all those that feare God, *to hold fast the confidence of their hope to the end* s. Though there be many a storme after our sowing, the harueſt will come, and we shall be comforted. The farmers of the world pay their workemen strait after their labour, before the corne be ripe, but the paiment is of farre leſſe value then the corne. God beſtoweth vpon his, all that they haue sowne, and the hire shall farre exceede their trauaile, *He that followeth after righteouſneſſe shall finde life, righteouſnes, and glorie* t, there are three for one. Let as haue reſpect to *the Recompence of reward* u, Looke we *the ioy that is set before vs* x, remember *the hope that is laid vp for vs in heauen* x. And let the Atheists and god-les persons scorne while they will, and say (as they doe) what are these the better for all this adoe? Are not we as healthie, as rich, as merie, as well esteemed as they? Certaine it is, that if we *haue our fruit in holines, our end shalbe Euerlasting Life* y, *our hope shall not make vs ashamed* z. As for them, let them alone, *their day is comming* a, *their candle shall be put out* b, *their hope shall perish* c, *the first borne of death shall deuoure their strength* d, and then (though to late) *they shall returne and discerne betweene the righteous and the wicked, betwixt him that serueth God, and him that serueth him not* e.

s Heb.3.6.

t Pro.21.21.

u Heb.11.26.

x Heb.12.2.

x Col.3.4.

y Rom.6.22.

z Rom.5.5.

a Pſal.37.13.

b Iob.18.6.

c Pro.24.7.

d Iob.18.13.

e Mal.13.18.

The end of the fifth Sermon.

The ſixth Sermon.

The Huſbandrie and the Harueſt of the Wicked.

Prou. 22. 8.

He that ſoweth Iniquitie, ſhall reape Affliction.

IN this clauſe the purpoſe of the ſpirit of God, is, to let vs ſee the Huſbandrie and Harueſt of the Wicked. The Husbandrie in theſe words, *He that ſoweth Iniquitie:* The Harueſt in theſe, *ſhall reape affliction:* I will open theſe points in order. 1. What it is to *ſow Iniquitie:* 2. What is the *Affliction* which they ſhall reape which ſow iniquitie. 3. How true it is, which is here ſaid, that the ſower *of Iniquitie ſhall reape affliction.* 4. What doctrines we may learne out of all theſe for our Inſtruction.

The poinct handled in this ſermon.

To *ſow iniquitie*, is the ſame which Saint Paul calleth, *to ſow to the fleſh* [a], Againe, *to ſow to the fleſh is to liue after the fleſh* [b], *to take thought for it, to fulfill it* [c], *to obey ſinne in the luſts thereof* [d], *to walke in the waies of a mans owne heart* [e], to keepe on in a mans *owne race* [f], *to be hardened through the deceitfulnes of ſinne* [g], to follow onely ſuch an end of life, as a mans owne carnall and corrupt humor leades vnto. This wretched courſe of glutting ones ſelfe with the *pleaſures of ſinne* [h], is well called *ſowing* for theſe reſpects. Firſt, before ſowing, goeth the dreſſing, the working, and manuring of the ground, to make it fat, that the ſeed caſt into it, may come to the better perfection; ſo doe euill men make themſelues readie

1. What it is to ſow Iniquitie.

a Gal. 6. 8.
b Rom. 8. 13.
c Rom. 13. 14.
d Rom. 6. 12.
e Eccl. 11. 9.
f Jer. 8. 6.
g Heb. 3. 13.
h Heb. 11. 25.

readie before hand, that when euill commeth to practiſe, they may goe through with it, with the greater boldnes. This is that which Saint Iames calleth the *nourishing of the heart* [i]: It is tearmed ſome while, *a bleſſing themſelues* [k], ſome while an *encouraging themſelues in a wicked purpoſe*: *They ſay in their hearts, he hath forgotte, he hideth away his face & wil neuer ſee* [m], *He wil do neither good nor euill* [n]. Thus their *heart* is made as fatte *as greaſe* [o], that the ſeed of Iniquitie may come to a more ſpeedie ripenes. Secondly, plowing and ſowing are accompanied with much induſtrie. Whoſe life is more full of labour then the Plow-mans? Great is the diligence of the vngodly in the furtherance of Iniquity. They imagine *it vpon their beds* [p], they *riſe early to follow it*, and hold on vntill *night* [q], they *cannot ſleepe except they haue done euill* [r], The *High preiſt will hold a Counſell euen in the dawning to condemne Chriſt* [ſ]. Thirdly ſowing albeit it be laborious, yet it is ful of contentment. A faire ſeaſonable ſeede time, a kindly turning vp of the land, when the clods doe breake eaſily with the harrow, what a ioy are theſe things to the Husbandman. No leſſe is the ioy of the wicked in doing naughtily. It *is a paſtime to doe wickedly* [t], It is *meate and drinke* [u], Glad is the *Adulterer of the twilight* [x]; Ioy it is to the Malicious to *ſee the deſtruction of him that hated him* [y], Well is the oppreſſor when he can *draw the poore into his net* [y], Iocund is the drunkard when he hath his companions about him to whom he may ſay, *come I will bring wine and we will fill our ſelues with ſtrong drinke, and to morrow ſhalbe as this day, and much more abundant* [z], *The bread of deceit is* ſweet to a man [a]. Fourthly. in ſowing there goe many ſeedes together, a whole handfull at a time, one handfull after another: In the liues of the wicked there is plentie of euils, ſinne neuer goeth alone, one maketh way for another. Some will ſay of ſome man, *It is pitie, he hath but one fault, he is ſomething couetous, or he is giuen to drinke, or to luſt, &c.*

This

[i] Iam. 5. 5.
[k] Deu. 29. 19.
[l] Pſal. 64. 5.
[m] Pſal. 10. 11.
[n] Zeph. 1. 12.
[o] Pſa. 119. 70.
[p] Mic. 2. 1.
[q] Iſa. 5. 11.
[r] Pro. 4. 16.
[ſ] Math. 27. 1.
[t] Pro. 10. 23.
[u] Pro. 4. 17.
[x] Iob. 24. 15.
[y] Iob. 31. 29.
[y] Pſa. 10. 9.
[z] Iſa. 56. 12.
[a] Pro. 20. 7.

This is vnpossible. If a man haue one such grosse sinne, he cannot but haue a great many pettie ones to attend it, to feed it, to helpe it forward; sinnes are linked togither, entertaine one and the rest will follow. Fistly, after sowing, the ground is harrowed, the seed couered, that it may receiue life and heate, and so come to perfection: After euill is once entertained in the heart, oh what pollicie is there to secret it, what meanes to carie it closely, that it may haue no stoppage in the execution. Cain will not attempt any thing against his brother neere home, in the sight and presence of his father, but when he meetes him in the *field*, he will *rise against him and slay him* [b], *Gehazi* will not make all the towne acquainted with his purpose, but he will runne after Naaman for a bribe, that none may espie it [c]. What plottes doe euill persons lay dayly for the accomplishment of their wicked purposes? The husbandman would not haue a seed lost if he might, an euill man would not haue one of his sinfull deuises faile, if it were possible. Sixtly, there is great care to preuent all hinderances to the grouth of the seed, birds are fraied away, cattell are not suffered to enter, passengers (as much as may be) are shut out: No lesse opposition is there in euill men against all that goe about to stop them in their course. They *hate him that rebukes* [d], He is an *enemie*, that telleth them *the truth* [e]. Crie out vpon them and proclaime against them, *the word of the Lord shall be made a reproch vnto them, and in derision daily* [f], What sir? *shall you rule ? who is Lord ouer vs* [g]? we will *doe whatsoeuer thing goeth out of our owne mouth* [h]. Thus you see what it is to *sow Iniquitie*. Generally it is this, to liue in the continuall seruice and practise of sinne. More particularly, it is discerned by these signes. 1. A cherishing and an encouraging the heart to euill. 2. A taking paines to do naughtily. 3. A delighting in Wickednes. 4. A heaping of one sin in the neck of another. 5. A plotting for the bringing of euill to perfection,

b Gen. 4. 8.
c 2. Kin. 5. 20.
d Amos. 5. 10.
e Gal. 4. 16.
f Ier. 20. 8.
g Gen. 19. 9.
h Ia. 11. 4.
i Ier. 44. 17.

6. Withſtanding of all meanes tending to recouery. This is the husbandry of the wicked, and the common husbandry of the world now a daies: Euery man hath his plough going in this kind of tillage, no time of the yeare, no weather for this purpoſe ſeemes vnſeaſonable.

j What is the Affliction to be reaped.

The ſecond point is, what is the *Affliction* or *Trouble* which followeth this *ſowing of Iniquity*: Let vs conſider the ſpeech of the Apoſtle: *He that commeth to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reape corruption* k; Hee ſhall haue for his reward Gods iudgement; I wil open two points. 1. what the *Affliction* or *Iudgement* is. 2. why the comming of it in, is called *reaping*. The affliction here ment, is either in this life, or hereafter. That which is in this life is either outward, or inward. Vnder the outward affliction are comprehended ſtraunge diſeaſes, feareſull kinds of death, ouerthrow of eſtate, and credit in the world, and ſuch like. Thus it ſometimes falleth out. The Sodomits burning with vnnaturall luſt, were conſumed with a ſupernaturall fire l. *Agag, as his ſword had made women childleſs, ſo was his mother childleſs* by his execution m. *Gehazi* was puniſhed with the *Leproſie* for his falſhood n. *Ahab* ſhed *Naboths* blood, *and the dogs licked his blood* o. The Iſraelites went a *whoring from vnder their God, therefore their daughters were harlots, and their ſpouſes whores* p: They *ſerued ſtrange Gods in their owne land*, therefore *they ſerued ſtrangers in a land which was not theirs* q. Iudas ſold Chriſt to the Croſſe, and then himſelfe to the gallowes r. Thus it ſometimes falleth out, that the *wicked are recompenſed in the earth* s, with outward and viſible iudgements: But it is not ſo alwaies; for many times they *liue, and waxe old, and grow in wealth, and the rod of God is not vpon them* t, *they are not plagued with other men* u, *but proſper and encreaſe in riches* x. yea when they *rebelliouſly tranſgreſſe* x. And yet there is a curſe followeth them, and that is this; their *eaſe ſlayeth* them, and their *proſperity deſtroyeth them* y. The inward

k Gal.6.8.

l Gen.19.

m 1.Sam 15.33.
n 1.King.5.27.
o 1.King.22.38

p Hoſ.4.12.13.

q Ier.5.19.

r Mat.27.5.
s Pro.11.31.

t Iob.21.7.9.
u Pſa.73.5.
x Ver.12.
x Ier.12.1.
y Pro.1.32.

ward plague or affliction is vpon the soule and conscience: and that is two waies. 1. either they have a conscience full of inward vexation, alwaies fighting and amazing them, & tormenting them with guilty feares; causing them to *feare* sometimes *where no feare is* [z], or at the very *shaking of a leafe* [a]: Thus having a *trembling heart* [b], they are continually as one that *trauaileth of child* [c], neither is there vnto them any *peace* [d]. Such a conscience had Cain, who thought that *whosoeuer did find him, would slay him* [e]. 2. Or else they are punished with a *reprobate mind* [f], a conscience *past feeling* [g], *burned with an hot yron* [h]. This is no molestation in sense, but indeed and in the issue it is the greatest Affliction. Of a stirring conscience there may be some hope, but of a hardned crusted conscience there is none.

z Psal. 53. 5.
a Leu. 26. 36.
b Deu. 28. 65.
c Iob. 15. 20.
d Isa. 57. 20.
e Gen. 4. 14.
f Rom. 1. 28.
g Eph. 4. 19.
h 1. Tim. 4. 2.

The trouble & iudgement in the life to come stands thus: First, at death *terrors take them as waters* [i], their *soules are fetched away* [k] from them, *and kept in euerlasting chaines vnder darkenes, vnto the iudgement of the great day* [l]. Next, when that day commeth, *Hell shall deliuer them vp to be iudged* [m], *the bookes shall be opened* [n], *things hid in darkenes shall be manifest* [o], they shall *receiue according to that they haue done* [p], they shall goe into *the euerlasting fire prepared for the Deuill and his Angels* [q], there *death shall feed vpon them* [r], *the fire that is not blown shall deuour them* [s]: This is called *the second death* [t], *vtter darkenes* [u], *where the worme dyeth not, and the fire neuer goeth out* [x]. These things are meant by this word *Affliction* or *Molestation*. Now this is said to be *reaped*, because of the fulnes of it. One corne sometimes bringeth sundry eares, one eare many graines: so the Lord will turne vpon the wicked *double* [z] nay *seuenfold* [y]. A few *pleasures of sinne*, and that but *for a season* [z], are recompensed with multitude of woes and that for euer: He will make them wring out, and *drinke the very dregges of his cup* [a]. Thus they shall haue *good measure, pressed downe, shaken together, and running ouer* [b].

i Iob. 27. 20.
k Luk. 12. 20.
l Iud. 6.
m Reu. 20. 13.
n Verse 12.
o 1. Cor. 4. 5.
p 2 Cor. 5. 10.
q Matth. 25. 41.
r Psal. 49. 14.
s Iob. 20. 26.
t Reuel. 21. 8.
u Math. 22. 13.
x Mark. 9. 44.
z Reu. 18. 6.
y Psal. 79. 12.
z Heb. 11. 25.
a Psal. 75. 8.
b Luk. 6. 38.

The

3. The certentie of that which Salomon here auoucheth.

The next point, is the certenty of this saying, that *he that soweth iniquity, shall reape trouble.* The Scripture prooueth it by a prouerbiall speech, *Whatsoeuer a man soweth, that shall he also reape* [c]. He that soweth cockle cannot expect a crop of wheat: After tares cast into the ground, it is in vaine to look for a barley-harueſt. They which sow nothing but the curſed ſeeds of a godles life, how can they expect the crop of eternall life. *They shall eate the fruit of their owne way* saith the Scripture [d]. Againe, it is the vnchangeable ordinance of God, he hath tied them together with a chaine of Adamant, and they cannot be ſundred; miſchiefe in this life, miſerie in the life to come; wickednes here, wretchednes there; no repentance here, no ſaluation there; a Deuill in earth, no Saint in heauen. This is a courſe which cannot be altered.

c Gal. 6. 7.

d Prou. 1. 31.

4. what points of Doctrine.

The text thus opened, and thus prooued to be true, offereth to our conſideration two points of doctrine. 1. The greatnes of Gods patience. 2. The certenty of his iuſtice. The greatnes of Gods patience is gathered out of the word (*Reape,*) by which it appeares, that God doth not by and by puniſh ſinne to the vtmoſt vpon the committing it: but as there is a diſtance of time, betweene the putting the ſeed into the ground, and the reaping, ſo the Lord differs the rendring to the wicked their deſert into their boſome, vntill their *wickednes be full* [e]. Of this patience of God, the Scripture ſpeaketh notably: Firſt, generally, then by degrees. In generall he is ſaid to be *ſlow to anger* [f], *to ſtriue with man* [g], *to waite that he may haue mercie* [h], to haue his *bowels troubled* for men [i]: By degrees againe his patience is noted, as that he looketh *all the day long* [k], *nay, fortie dayes* [l], nay, the compaſſe of a yeare, from the time of planting, vntill the time of gathering fruite [m], nay, *three yeares* [n], *fortie yeares* [o], *an hundred and twentie yeares* [p], nay, for ſome thouſands of yeares [q]: yea, and when he doth giue ſome euidence of his wrath, yet he

1. Doct.

e Gen. 15. 16.

f Exod. 34. 6.
g Gen. 6. 3.
h Iſa. 30. 18.
i Ier. 31. 20.
k Iſa. 65. 2.
l Ion. 3. 4.
m Iſa. 5. 4.
n Luk. 13. 7.
o Pſal. 95. 10.
p 1. Pet. 3. 20. Gen. 6. 3.
q Act. 14. 16.

he *doth not ſtirre vp all his wrath* [a], but in it *remembreth mercie* [b]. He is ſo full of forbearance, that the world accounts it *ſlacknes* [c], yea and his owne ſeruants are faine to expoſtulate with him touching it, *Why ſtandeſt thou ſo farre off, O Lord, and hideſt thee in due time* [d]? This is Gods patience.

[a] Pſal.78.38. [b] Hab.3.2. [c] 2.Pet.3.9. [d] Pſal.10.1.

The vſe of it we are taught in the Scripture, namely, that it ſhould *lead vs to repentance* [*]. The patience of God is euer preaching vnto vs, *Turne you, turne you from your euill waies, for why will ye die* [x]? It is all one with God to puniſh now, or hereafter, here or in hell. It is not for lack of ablenes to puniſh, or for lacke of knowledge what we doe, but in patience wholy that we might returne and be ſaued. Marke then. Haſt thou hitherto bene a man of an euil life, a deſpiſer of good things, a neglecter of Gods worſhip, a lother of his word, and blaſphemer, a whore-maſter, a drunkard, an excorter, a ruffian, and hath God forborne thee now theſe ten or twentie yeares, what ſhalt thou now doe? continue in thy courſe, *draw iniquitie with cords of vanitie* [y], *adde drunkennes to thirſt* [z], multiply tranſgreſſions, *make a mocke of Gods counſell* [a], *and thinke him to be ſuch an one as thy ſelfe* [b]? God forbid. Nay rather, conſider that God all this while, is *returned to his place, till thou acknowledge thy faults* [c], and doth euen long for thy conuerſion. Wherefore reſolue thou like the prodigall ſonne, *to riſe and goe to thy father* [d], *while he is called to date* [e], *while he may be found* [f]. *Giue no ſleepe to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eyelids* [g], *let teares runne downe like a riuer, take thee no reſt, neither let the apple of thine eye ceaſe* [h], vntill thou haſt *found reſt to thy ſoule* [i]. This is the true vſe of Gods patience, euen to be a ſpurre to repentance. What iuſt occaſion haue we here of complaining? when was euer the ſaying of Salomon more true, *Becauſe ſentence againſt an euill worke is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the heart of the children of men is fully ſet in them to doe euill* [k]. God is patient, and we,

The vſe.

[*] Rom.2.4. [x] Ezec.33.11. [y] Iſa.5.18. [z] Deut.29.19. [a] Prou.1.25. [b] Pſal.50.21. [c] Hoſ.5.15. [d] Luke 15.18. [e] Heb.3.13. [f] Iſa.55.6. [g] Prou.6.4. [h] Lam.2.18. [i] Matth.11.29. [k] Eccl.8.11.

we grow inſolent, God forbeares, and we lay on lode, he is ſlow to anger, and we are ſlacke to repent, hee willing to ſhew mercie, and we will not be ſaued: he crieth, *Behold, I ſtand at the doore and knocke*[l], wee anſwer, *Depart from vs, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy waies*[m]. This is the common ſickneſſe of the times, to helpe it if it be poſſible, let vs come to the next doctrine.

l Reu.3.20.
m Iob.21.14.

2. Doct. And that is touching the certentie of Gods iuſtice. If there be no remedie but men will needes goe on to ſow iniquitie, the harueſt will come, ſinne will be ripe, and they ſhall reape deſtruction. Here is a large field, and there is no point more manifeſt in the Scripture. *He doth not make the wicked innocent*[n], he will not forgiue him, that will not be reclaimed. *The Lord will not be mercifull vnto him, but the wrath of the Lord and his iealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man*[o]: *affliction and anguiſh all make him afraid*[p], *he is kept vnto the day of deſtruction*[q], *God ſhall wound his haires pate, that walketh in his ſinnes*[r], *he will teare him in peeces*[s], *will ſhall hunt him to deſtruction*[t]. When men ſay in *their hearts, God hath forgotten*[u], then is he *whetting*[v], *and furbiſhing his ſword*[x], all that while, *the damnation ſleepeth not*[y]; nay, the farther the arme is fetched about, the heauier will the ſtroke be; the nearer the arrow is drawne to the head, the deeper will it wound when it comes. God is called a *Iudge*[z], *a righteous iudge*[a], *a iealous God*[b], *a hater of them that worke iniquitie*[c], *one who accepteth not the perſons of Princes*[d], theſe titles could not agree vnto God, if he ſhould euer ſuffer the abuſers of his mercie and the deſpiſers of his goodnes, to ſcape away vnpuniſhed.

n Exod.34.7.
o Deu.29.20.
p Iob.18.24.
q Iob.21.30.
r Pſal.68.21.
s Pſal.50.22.
t Pſal.147.11.
u Pſal.10.11.
v Pſal.7.12.
x Ezech.21.9.
y 2.Pet.2.3.
z Pſal.50.6.
a 2.Tim.4.8.
b Exod.20.5.
c Pſal.5.6.
d Iob.34.19.

The 1. Vſe

This point ſerues firſt to be an aſſurance to vs, of that great & generall Seſſions, *wherein we muſt all appeare before the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt*[e]. For hence we reaſon thus, that ſeeing the Lord will certenly recompenſe vnto the ſeedes-men of Iniquitie, their full reward into their boſome, and ſeeing here in the world, it falleth

e 2.Cor.5.10.

out, that they *couer their face with fatte, and haue collops on their flanke* [f], *waters of a full cup, beeing wrung out vnto them* [g], therefore certenly there is a time, a day *of the declaration of the iust iudgement of God* [h], in which men shall say, *Doubtles there is a God that iudgeth the earth* [i]. This kind of reasoning we are taught by the Apostle, who assureth those to whom he wrote, that their *suffering for the kingdome of God*, was a *token of Gods righteous iudgement*, in which *tribulation* should be *recompensed to the troublers*, and *rest to the troubled* [k]. And this day we may well thinke to be nigh, euen as by *the Figge-tree bringing forth leaues, we know that summer is neere* [l], sin in all kinds groweth to a ripenes & perfection, the wickednes of the times, is euen come to the full. Certenly ere long the Lord will command his *Angel, to thrust in his sharpe sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine-yard of the earth, for her grapes are ripe* [m], *and cast them into the great winepresses of the wrath of God* [n]. The Lord grant that we may looke for that day, and hasten to it [o], crying dayly, *Come Lord Iesus* [p], *returne my welbeloued, and be like to the Roe, or young Hart vpon the mountaines of Bether* [q].

f Iob.15.27.
g Psa.75.10.
h Rom.2.5.
i Psa.58.11.
k 2.The.1.6.7.
l Matth.24.32.
m Reu.14.18.
n Verse 19.
o 2.Pet.3.12.
p Reu.22.20.
q Can.2.17.

Secondly, this shewes the truth of *Salomons* words, *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke* [r]; Men doe altogether deceiue themselues in their owne fancies: they thinke they may *sow Iniquitie*, and yet *reape happines*, they may despise Gods bountie here, and yet inioy Gods mercie hereafter, they may liue in the seruice of sinne, and yet die in the fauour of God, they may keepe the way to hell, and yet arriue at the gate of heauen. No it is vnpossible, *Whatsoeuer a man soweth, the same shall he also reape* [s], *they that plow iniquitie, and sow wickednes, reape the same* [t], This is the course, and God will not alter it. I say then with the Apostle, *Let no man deceiue you with vaine words* [u], such as is our course, such shalbe our reward. God may doe much at an instant, but to put it to that, is a very bold aduenture. There may come a yeare (and

r The 2. Vse.
r Iro.11.18.
s Gal.6.7.
t Iob.4.8.
u Eph.5.6.

doth sometime) when late husbands, which put least worth to their grounds, haue the best corne, but it is no wisedome thereof to make a rule. Keepe the course set downe by God, and thou canst not miscarie. *He that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reape life eternall*[t]. It may be thought I teach men to build vpon Workes: I speake now onely, who they are which shall inherit eternall life, and of the order how life eternall is attained, not of the cause wherefore it is giuen. Holinesse is the way (*the way shall be called Holy*[x],) he that thinkes to come by a freer and a more pleasant course, by that which the Scripture calleth *the way of sinners*[y], that man shall be called *the least in the kingdome of God*[z].

[t] Gal. 6, 8.

[x] Isa. 35, 8.

[y] Psal. 1. 1.

[z] Matth. 5. 19.

Let God alone haue the Glorie.

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